









THE EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT  
AND AFTER



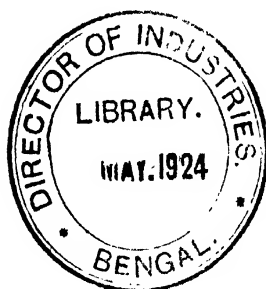
THE EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT  
AND AFTER  
BY SIR  
G. W. KEKEWICH

K.C.B., D.C.L.

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS, AND  
FORMERLY SECRETARY OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, THE  
SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT, AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION,  
AND FROM 1906 TO 1910 M.P. FOR THE CITY OF EXETER

*Quantula sapientia gubernatur mundus !*

*(With how little wisdom is the world governed !)*



LONDON  
CONSTABLE AND COMPANY LTD.

*First published 1920.*

## Dedication

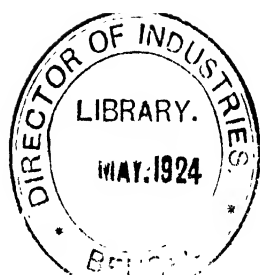
I dedicate this book to the National Union of Teachers:

Because they have always steadfastly supported me in foul as well as fair weather.

Because, though I am not a certificated teacher, they have conferred upon me a unique distinction in making me an honorary Member of their Union and a Life Member of their Annual Conference.

But chiefly because they have always fearlessly attacked all absurdities of our Educational System, have never cringed before officialism, have stood for progress—never for apathy or reaction,—have constantly and consistently used their powerful influence for the good of the child, as well as of the teacher, and have been the mightiest lever of educational reform.





# CONTENTS

## SECTION I

	PAGE
I. APPOINTMENT AS EXAMINER . . . . .	3
II. EXAMINER . . . . .	8
III. EXAMINERS . . . . .	16
IV. EXAMINERS ( <i>continued</i> ) . . . . .	19
V. INSPECTORS . . . . .	23
VI. THE CLERICAL STAFF . . . . .	32
VII. AFTER THE ACT OF 1870 . . . . .	34

## SECTION II

I. APPOINTMENT AS SECRETARY . . . . .	41
II. DIFFICULTIES . . . . .	47
III. POLICY . . . . .	50
IV. THE CODE OF 1890 . . . . .	53
V. A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL, AND THE CODE IN PARLIAMENT . . . . .	59
VI. THE RECEPTION OF THE CODE BY THE TEACHERS AND SUBSEQUENT RELATIONS WITH THEM . . . . .	62
VII. THE FREE EDUCATION ACT . . . . .	71
VIII. THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT OF 1892 AND CIRCULAR 321 . . . . .	83
IX. OTHER REFORMS . . . . .	89
X. THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT OF 1895 — THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE . . . . .	92

## viii THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

	PAGE
XI. SIR JOHN GORST . . . . .	100
XII. BOARD OF EDUCATION . . . . .	107
XIII. EDUCATION UNDER THE TORY GOVERNMENT . . . . .	110

### SECTION III

I. THE SECRETARY'S POSITION AND WORK . . . . .	116
II. PRIVATE SECRETARIES . . . . .	121
III. MINISTERS . . . . .	127
IV. THE PARIS EXHIBITION . . . . .	133
V. CITY DINNERS . . . . .	136
VI. COURT . . . . .	139
VII. SCHOOL OPENINGS, ETC. . . . .	146
VIII. CASTE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	149
IX. DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL . . . . .	157
X. EXPENDITURE AND WASTE . . . . .	163
XI. DENOMINATIONAL AND BOARD SCHOOLS . . . . .	168
XII. THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION . . . . .	172
XIII. RELIGIOUS MINORITIES—ROMAN CATHOLICS AND JEWS . . . . .	181
XIV. THE LESSONS OF THE WAR . . . . .	188
XV. EDUCATION REFORMS . . . . .	198
XVI. TEACHERS' PENSIONS . . . . .	206
XVII. WOMEN IN OFFICIAL LIFE . . . . .	211

### SECTION IV

I. THE SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT . . . . .	219
II. THE EDUCATION BILL OF 1902 . . . . .	227
III. AFTERMATH . . . . .	234
IV. BUXTON . . . . .	241
V. CANDIDATURE FOR EXETER, ETC. . . . .	244

# CONTENTS

ix

## SECTION V

	PAGE
I. THE LIBERAL-LABOUR MAJORITY OF 1906 . . .	257
II. THE GOVERNMENT AND THE EDUCATION BILL OF 1906	263
III. IMPRESSIONS . . . . .	270
IV. WASTE OF TIME IN PARLIAMENT . . . . .	275
V. MEMBERS AND MONEY . . . . .	281

## SECTION VI

I. HONESTY . . . . .	287
II. HONOURS . . . . .	291
III. UNPOPULAR CAUSES—ANTI-VIVISECTION . . . . .	296
IV. UNPOPULAR CAUSES—VACCINATION . . . . .	301
V. EDUCATION TO-DAY—LEGISLATION . . . . .	306
VI. EDUCATION TO-DAY—TEACHERS . . . . .	312
VII. THE CIVIL SERVICE . . . . .	317
VIII. A FINAL WORD . . . . .	323

## APPENDICES

I. ADDRESS PRESENTED AT THE BUXTON CONFERENCE, 1903, BY THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS . . .	327
II. RESOLUTION OF NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS . . .	329
III. ARTICLE FROM "THE SCHOOLMASTER" . . . . .	330
IV. CHAOS IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT . . . . .	335
V. CORRUPT GOVERNMENT—THE CAUCUS AND ELECTIONS . . .	340
VI. CORRUPT GOVERNMENT — PARLIAMENT, PARTY, AND HONOURS . . . . .	347
VII. CORRUPT GOVERNMENT—THE CIVIL SERVICE . . . . .	353



## SECTION I

Alas ! unconscious of their doom  
The little victims play.

GRAY.

IN this section I endeavour not merely to include a kind of personal record but also to give a presentment of the Education Department (especially as regards its higher staff) as it was some fifty years ago, and during the period 1868-90. Legislatively that was a time of constant and valuable progress ; but as regards the so-called education given in the schools, it was one of stagnation, and of the maintenance of the Revised Code (long after all excuse for its fetters had ceased to exist), which sapped the energies of the teachers, dulled the brains of the children, and restricted the educational work of the Department.



## I

### APPOINTMENT AS EXAMINER

WHEN I went up to Oxford in 1859 I was "intended" (as the phrase goes) for the Church. A *locum tenens* had actually been put into a family living, in Devonshire, to "keep it warm" for me against the time when I should have left the University and obtained the necessary qualifications for the cure of souls. But Eton and Oxford instilled into me (I think on the whole fortunately) an ambition to seek some better means of making a livelihood than that of joining a profession which offered nothing more than an easy humdrum life in a country vicarage, and the inculcation of doubtful doctrine into the unreceptive soul of the agricultural labourer. I rejoice to-day—I have always rejoiced more and more as life went on—that such an alluring prospect of inglorious and virtuous ease did not appeal to me, although, according to my excellent relations, it was pregnant with possibilities of Deaneries, Canonries, Archdeaconries, shovel hats and gaiters, *et hoc genus omne*.

My desire was to get into a business house, in the hope that some day or other I might obtain a partnership. Several houses were approached on my behalf, but the heads of them did not seem to understand the merits of an University education, and appeared



#### 4 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

to think that a knowledge of Greek, Latin, ancient history, and philosophy were not the best of foundations for a commercial life. Whatever I thought then, I bow to their wisdom now.

So I was driven, as hundreds of other unemployed products of the Universities have been, to the legal profession, which appeared to be the only one, except the Church, for which I was not absolutely unfit. Even to qualify for the Bar my University education had to be supplemented by a certain number of dinners in the Hall of Lincoln's Inn, with such reading of law as was convenient.

I had been two years "reading" for the Bar when, quite unexpectedly, I was offered the appointment of Examiner in the Education Department, of the very existence of which I was previously unaware.

The Civil Service of the Crown was a very curiously and variously constituted body when I entered it in 1868. The uniform basis of it was nomination and patronage. It was crowded by the dependents and friends, and friends of friends, of the Ministers in whose hands the patronage lay. The very messengers were the former footmen, coachmen, and butlers of Ministers. It was admirably organised as a field for jobbery and refuge for incompetence. Yet, in consequence of the grave difficulties then experienced by men of liberal education in obtaining a means of livelihood, and of the resulting keen competition for nominations, it attracted many applicants of considerable, and some of distinguished, ability. Most of the work, however, which was done in the Education Department and, for that matter, in other Offices as well, was mechanical, and required little training, knowledge, or brains; the major part

•

consisted of tabulation of statistics and accounts (often with much unnecessary detail), and a great portion of it was assigned to men who were not in the Civil Service, but who were hired from a law stationer.

The appointment of Examiner in the Education Department was no exception to the general rule except so far as an unwritten law prevailed that the appointment should be made from a particular class. It was given by pure nomination, without even the perfunctory qualifying examination that was in some other cases required. Its very nomenclature was misleading. The designation was assigned apparently on the analogy of ticket examiner on a railway, for the Examiners examined no children or teachers, as their names would seem to imply, but only the reports of Inspectors of schools. The designation of Examiner and Inspector might properly have been interchanged, for the Inspectors examined the schools and the Examiners inspected the reports. The names given, however, persist until the present day, and are likely to persist hereafter, for the name of Higher Division *Clerk* is, and always has been, abhorrent to the Examiner, and the Inspectors now conduct less examination and more true inspection.

My own appointment may be cited as an example of how the system of nomination was carried out. Sir Stafford Northcote (afterwards Lord Iddesleigh), who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, had been asked by my father, who was then in Parliament, and who was a connection of the Northcotes by marriage, to obtain for me an appointment in the Civil Service. No particular position was indicated, and I do not think that my father knew that such

## 6 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

persons as Examiners existed—I certainly was in happy ignorance of the fact. Sir Stafford Northcote, however, had himself, some years before, conducted an inquiry into the staff and functions of the Education Department, and I presume he thought that I might be capable of fulfilling the duties, of which he knew the extent and moderation. His influence was, of course, all-powerful at that time, and accordingly in March 1868 I received a letter from him to the effect that, if I called at the Privy Council Office and asked for an interview, the Duke of Marlborough, then Lord President of the Council, would appoint me to an Examinership in the Education Department.

It was a simple process. Sir Stafford had placed my name on the list of candidates, and I confess that I have always thought that my actual selection was due to a happy or unhappy mistake in his description of my qualifications. Then, as now, a First Class in Final Schools at Oxford or Cambridge was usually regarded as an indispensable, or almost indispensable, condition of appointment, and to that extent practically, though not technically, the range of nomination was restricted. But years after, when I was looking through the book of candidates' names, in order to select one for appointment, I came across my own, and found that Sir Stafford and the Education Department had credited me with a First Class in the Oxford Final Classical Schools, although I had only obtained a Second. Had it not been for this mistake I doubt very much whether I should have obtained the appointment. It is curious how such small things (one word in my case) change the whole current of life.

An immediate three hundred a year was a great

temptation to abandon the distant prospect of forensic distinction and the woolsack, and I naturally yielded to it. I knew nothing of the Civil Service, nor even that such a place as the Education Department existed, but some of my father's political friends had suggested to him the Civil Service as offering what they called a career, and talked wildly but authoritatively of Secretaryships worth thousands per annum, that could be had almost for the asking. Moreover, like most young men who have passed University examinations with some credit, I vainly imagined that I was a very clever fellow, and did not doubt that my merits would soon be recognised, and that I should shortly be placed at the head of any office I entered. It took me twenty-two years of work, coupled with a good share of luck, to attain that position.

I went to the Privy Council Office immediately, saw the Duke of Marlborough and the Secretary, Mr. Lingen (afterwards Lord Lingen), and was duly appointed. I cannot, at this distance of time, remember what passed at these interviews, except that they were of exceedingly short duration, and included no inquiry whatever into my knowledge of education or of the system then in operation, of which I was of course absolutely ignorant.

•

## II

### EXAMINER

I NATURALLY expected that I should find myself a Triton amongst the minnows. What I actually found was that I was a minnow amongst the Tritons. Excepting some three or four clerks who had been transferred and promoted from the Privy Council Office when the Education Department was formed, the Examiners were all men who had greatly distinguished themselves at Oxford or Cambridge. They formed exactly the same sort of society that is to be found in any College Common-room. They were scholars, poets, philosophers and musicians, etc., and they were ready to discuss—and discuss well—any subject under the sun except education, of which, so far as I remember, they did not know, and did not profess to know, anything outside their limited and superficial duty of administering the State grant. Most of them had never been in the inside of a school. It was apparently, however, beginning to dawn on the Office that such total ignorance was undesirable, for before being assigned to my ordinary duties, I was directed to accompany one of the Inspectors, the Rev. B. M. Cowie, afterwards Dean of Exeter, on his visits to schools, and I remember to this day the skilful manner in which that most

excellent and sympathetic man used to draw from the infants evidence of their knowledge of the difference between the spelling of "cat" and "dog."

But I do not think I profited much from this short period of training, or that my colleagues were in consequence any less fitted than I for carrying out the mechanical processes of which our work mainly consisted, for lack of such an experience.

Their society was charming, their wit and conversation admirable, but their abilities were wasted. They were Nasmyth hammers employed to crack stones.

There were ten of them, including myself. Of these, two conducted the correspondence of the Office in relation to grants in aid for building schools, two dealt with the rest of the correspondence, one was private secretary to the Vice-President of the Council, and the business of the remaining five was to settle what amount of annual grant for maintenance the report of H.M. Inspector justified my Lords of the Privy Council in awarding to, or withholding from, each school under inspection. As the decisions of the Examiners were not final, but subject to checking by clerks below them, and to revision by assistant Secretaries and the permanent Secretary above them, their responsibility, as may be imagined, was not excessive. Indeed it was most carefully limited. They were not permitted to sign an official letter, or even the form which conveyed the Inspector's report and the decision of the Lords of the Privy Council as to the amount of the grant, to the managers of each school. All that was allowed to them was to make suggestions or recommendations.

On the day I joined I was handed over to a Cam-

bridge Senior Classic to be instructed in my duties. He taught me the art of filling up a form of portentous length (irreverently termed by the Examiners a "gridiron") with figures copied from the returns made by the managers of the school, and from the Inspectors' report; and also how to exercise my discretion as to recommending the payment of a full or a reduced grant, and how to record my opinion of the school and teacher. Under the Revised Code, which then and for years afterwards regulated the procedure of the Education Department, and which I will deal with hereafter, deductions from the miserable grants were not only allowed, but freely imposed, with a severity that I suppose was considered by the official martinets of that day to be the best way to encourage the managers and teachers to do better. The heavier the fines we imposed, the greater credit we got from our superiors. In those days one of the principal items of the grant was a payment of two shillings and fourpence for every "pass" made by a child in reading or writing or arithmetic. Imagine the feelings of the unfortunate teacher when he looked over the Inspector's shoulder and saw the failures being recorded wholesale, and knew that his annual salary was being reduced by two and fourpence for each failure; for salaries of teachers in those days were usually not fixed but depended on the grant. But he knew more than that. He knew that when the Report got to the Office, the ruthless Lords of the Privy Council would dock the grant still further; supplementing the two-and-fourpenny failures by keeping back one or two tenths of what little remained. Moreover, he was apprehensive for his certificate, which at that time was heartlessly

suspended or cancelled on very slight provocation. I remember that once after I had suggested a deduction of two-tenths of the grant, Mr. Lingen, who happened to see the recommendation, sent for me and reproved me for not inflicting a larger fine. He then took his pen and wrote: "My Lords have ordered a deduction to be made from the grant of five-tenths for faults of instruction, and have suspended the certificate of the teacher." He added, addressing me, "There; I think that will do for them!" I should think it probably did. That performance was typical of the attitude of the Education Department towards the managers and teachers of schools in those days. The Department was always on the watch to find something which deserved a lecture or chastisement, but never ready to help, guide, or sympathise. The staff of distinguished and aristocratic scholars from the Universities treated elementary education and elementary teachers with contempt. Their cherished creed was that no education mattered or was of any real value except classics and mathematics, for they were University men, and the Universities had not yet realised (perhaps they do not fully realise yet) how much their own usefulness, as well as the future of the nation, depends on the linking up of the whole system of National Education. They had no use for village Hampdens, nor any idea that a child from the "lower" classes might, after all, possess a modicum of brains. A ploughman's son was destined to be a ploughman as his father was.

Every letter was written, every decision promulgated, in the name of "My Lords," the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education. That august body was the dread of school managers and



## 12 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

teachers. In their name penalties were inflicted and certificates cancelled, and on their authority even the unfortunate children who were candidates for pupil-teacherships were plucked in their examination. No doubt they pictured to themselves the "Lords" sitting round a table discussing arithmetic papers. The one thing "My Lords" seldom, or never, did was to offer a word of encouragement. Truly, they badly needed the archaic prayer in the Litany.

The great majority of the higher officials, Secretary, assistant Secretaries, and Examiners, had probably never seen an elementary school; and their acquaintance with the managers was confined to the rare occasions when they dared to prefer some complaint personally to the Department. Teachers they never saw; for teachers were never accorded an interview at Whitehall, and if a teacher dared to ask for one, he was directed to apply through the managers of his school, who were often the very persons at whom his complaint was aimed. Even the National Union of Teachers was not recognised, nor were its officials admitted within the sacred gates.

It is true that the Inspectors of schools, though drawn from the same aristocratic class as the staff inside the office, were in many cases more human. The fact that they were in daily touch with the actual work of the schools, and that the managers and teachers were something more to them than mere lists of names on paper, made a vast difference. Sympathetic Inspectors such as Dean Cowie and Matthew Arnold were not rare. I remember meeting the latter in one of the corridors of the Office, and asking him how he was getting on in the district to which he had recently been transferred. He replied: "Excel-

lently, my dear fellow. You see, I never recommend any deductions"—i.e. from the grants. He violated, of course, the instructions of the Department, but his good sense anticipated a very beneficial reform which was actually made many years afterwards in 1890.

The work of the Examiners was largely mechanical. Most of the correspondence of the Office might be supposed to be in a different category. But it nevertheless was at any rate quasi-mechanical, and certainly presented no serious difficulty, for it was mainly discharged by directing that sundry numbered paragraphs taken from a book of "Precedents" should be sent as replies to letters. These "Precedents" were originally taken from letters minuted by the Secretary, whose views were always supposed to be infallible, and as incontrovertible as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Most of the other letters, of which a majority simply notified the appointments of teachers, were answered by sending forms. If any new question arose, the Examiner did not presume to deal with it until he had taken the opinion of an assistant Secretary. The official correspondence therefore involved little responsibility and no sleepless nights.

The Examiners employed on "School Building," for which grants were made up to, and under certain circumstances beyond, 1870, depended almost entirely on the reports of the official architect and counsel upon plans and deeds, and the work ordinarily consisted in giving directions that these reports should be sent to the promoters of the schools. The rest of the Examiners, as has already been said, dealt with the reports of the Inspectors on their

## 14 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

annual visits to schools. Those who were employed on that kind of work were aggregated in one room (a very pleasant arrangement for social intercourse), and they guarded against over-work by settling for themselves the number of school reports that they could be expected to deal with in a day. The covers containing these reports (called in official language "Portfolios") were all placed together on a table at the commencement of each official day, and the Examiners helped themselves from the heap. An early arrival could therefore select his quota as he pleased, and confer upon himself a reward for punctuality by leaving the larger school reports for the benefit of the late-comers. Some years after I entered the Department one of the Examiners took advantage of this arrangement to enable himself to get through his work in record time, and then to betake himself to distant constituencies to make political speeches against the Government he was serving, and especially against the then Vice-President of his own Department—a proceeding which ended in his leaving the Civil Service, and being himself returned to Parliament, of which he was by no means an undistinguished member.

In the early days before 1871 the Scottish schools were still under the administration of the Education Department. But they were not subject to the Revised Code, which the Scots, with their usual wisdom, had rejected, rightly holding that as the condition of education in Scotland was far superior to that in England, no such drastic treatment was necessary or desirable. Consequently the Scottish schools were paid their grants under certain provisions of a previous Code, the happy result being that

the Education Department had little power to control, or rather to reduce, the amounts of the grants. As a further consequence, the reports on Scottish schools hardly ever presented any serious difficulties, and, as they called only for a glance at each report and a few strokes of the pen, were much in request among the Examiners.

At the time when I first entered the Office the number of school reports, whether Scottish or English, which the Examiners agreed to regard as a day's work was, I think, eight. When the schools to be dealt with were small, these might represent an hour or an hour and a half's work, and unless they were exceptionally large, eight reports were not exactly back-breaking, as they could usually be got through on an average in three hours or less, without any undue pressure on the brain. But in the course of time, as more schools came under inspection, this convenient practice led to arrears, and we had occasionally to put in one or two days' real work. I remember that once, when there was a considerable arrear, I despatched seventy of these "cases" (as they were called) in a day, a fact which may perhaps be taken to indicate the measure of the severity of the ordinary day's work. When any of us had completed the tale of reports he had allotted to himself, he betook himself to other pursuits, with the happy consciousness that he had done his duty.

### III

#### EXAMINERS

UNDER these circumstances, as might be imagined, we had plenty of leisure, and we came late and left early. There is a story of a Treasury clerk who, when he was asked by one of his friends how he liked the Civil Service, replied that he "liked it very well, only it cut up his day so." Our case was similar. The hour for attendance was eleven o'clock, but it was not often that any of us put in an appearance before half-past eleven or twelve; and we were supposed to leave at five, but most of us usually disappeared long before that hour. Included in the day's attendance was, of course, the necessary period for reading the *Times*, which was provided for us at the public expense, and the hour's interval for luncheon, which was generally prolonged. In fact, we attended practically as much or as little as we liked. Some of us (and I amongst them) were even guilty on occasion of going to the Office late in the afternoon, sometimes after office hours, and putting in the one or two hours' work which were necessary; and sometimes, but rarely, a full holiday was taken on French leave without discovery. But we did not always get off scot free. Some officious member of the Government or of Parliament might happen to

see one or more of us whom he happened to know taking his ease at some place of amusement or social function, or on the river, or in the cricket-field during office hours, and to be base enough to write to the Secretary, or to the Minister in charge of the Department, about such a serious aberration from duty ; and then, as a consequence, an attempt was usually made to secure better attendance. No penalty was, or could be, inflicted, and the result was merely a minute issued by the Secretary enlarging upon our iniquities. We thought that kind of thing quite unnecessary interference with our established rights. It was a calamity, but we had to submit for a while until the whole thing was forgotten, and the normal conditions of attendance could be reverted to without danger. Sometimes also, one of us happened to meet the Secretary or an assistant Secretary on arriving at the Office, contingencies which we particularly desired to avoid.

But to the initiated such an evil contretemps rarely occurred. In those days there was, and perhaps there is still, a corkscrew staircase in the corner of the Privy Council Office building abutting on Downing Street and Whitehall. If a man happened to be very late in the morning, he usually came into the Office by the Privy Council Office door in Downing Street, and took advantage of that somewhat remote and unfrequented corkscrew staircase, a procedure which was termed "turning the corner of the Secretary and assistant Secretaries," who did not use that particular staircase. What we dreaded was not the dismissal some of us richly deserved, for none of us ever had been dismissed, and we knew that nothing short of actual crime could oust

•

## 18 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

any of us, but we had, one and all, a holy horror of the possible introduction of an attendance-book, and we wanted to avoid that, while steering as close to the wind as possible. For many years the Examiners escaped that infliction, which, curiously enough, was eventually imposed upon them by myself, who was formerly one of the chief male-factors.

There was no necessity for the higher staff to go outside the Office in search of amusement or more congenial employment. There was conversation and discussion *ad libitum*. We had amongst us at different times several poets, three of whom were afterwards Professors of Poetry at Oxford. Our musicians, though they could not make sweet melody in the Office, could compose there ; our artists could sketch there ; and our poets could write there. One man, though not belonging to the original ten, edited an important Review in the intervals of his daily work.

We occasionally indulged in practical joking, usually, though not always, of a harmless kind. For example : When straps of webbing were substituted for tape for the purpose of tying up papers, one of us (a man who has since risen to high distinction) got hold of some bundles of straps, and, adding strap to strap, festooned the room of a colleague during his absence so that it resembled a gigantic spider's web, in the midst of which our friend found himself hopelessly entangled on his return. A not unpleasing diversion was found in occasional polemical discussions and quarrels among ourselves (a not unusual result of close acquaintanceship), which sometimes almost, but never quite, reached the point of personal violence.

•

## IV

### EXAMINERS (*Continued*)

WE always vigorously protested against any deviation from the strict rule of promotion by seniority, and even more vigorously against the introduction into the Office of any man from outside, except in ordinary course as a Junior Examiner, because it affected vested interests. Such a thing seldom happened, but about 1869, Mr. W. E. Forster, then Vice-President of the Committee of Council, appointed Mr. Cumin, who had never been even a civil servant, to be his private secretary. The Examiners had always regarded the private secretaryship to the Vice-President as their inalienable right, and themselves, without exception, as more highly qualified for it than any outsider could possibly be. It was a grave offence to their vanity, and an evil precedent for the future. The disturbance in the Office was consequently great, and a memorial was presented to the heads of the Department—not with any hope of getting the appointment cancelled, as we knew that was impossible—but in order to stop any renewal of such raids. But Mr. Forster knew what he was about. He was then engaged on framing the Bill which afterwards passed into law as the great Education Act of 1870, which has been the basis of educa-



## 20 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

tional legislation ever since. He needed a lawyer, especially one who had studied the problems of education with a wider outlook than was possible for the Examiners. Mr. Cumin had served on more than one Royal Commission on various aspects of education, had studied the subject from a detached position, besides being a competent lawyer, and, on the whole, was probably better fitted for the position than any of the officials within or without the Office at that time. He was subsequently appointed assistant Secretary to deal with legal questions arising under the Act—a proceeding which caused further trouble—and his intimate knowledge of the framing of the Act, and of the Parliamentary discussions upon it, undoubtedly pointed to him as a suitable man for the place, which he certainly filled with considerable ability. Afterwards, on the transfer of Sir F. Sandford to the Charity Commission, he became Secretary, in which position he was perhaps not equally successful. All this did not happen without causing serious commotion among the Examiners; but Mr. Cumin's ability, tact, good temper, and courtesy very soon disarmed opposition. He held the Secretaryship until his death in 1890. It was always understood that difficulties connected with his appointment as Secretary nearly led to the resignation of Mr. Mundella, then Vice-President of the Committee of Council. The selection was in the hands of the Lord President of the Council, who intended (probably on the recommendation of Sir F. Sandford) to appoint a well-known and able Inspector to the vacancy. When, however, Mr. Mundella became aware that such an appointment was contemplated, he insisted that Mr. Cumin should

be chosen, and it is said that in the end he wrote his resignation and threatened that he would send it to the Prime Minister. Then, and only then, the Lord President gave way, and Mr. Cumin was appointed. Opinion may vary as regards the wisdom of the choice, but personally I always have thought that he filled the position, if not with distinguished success, yet with efficiency. He was a remarkable mixture of sound common sense and curious fads, and, while a strong Liberal in politics, was thoroughly non-progressive in official matters.

To return to the Examiners. All questions which could not be dealt with according to some "precedent," in the shape of a ruling by the Secretary, were ordered to be referred by the Examiners to the assistant Secretaries. But the Examiner had to express his own view for the consideration of the assistant Secretary, and when he found any particular difficulty about making his recommendation it was customary for him to "pigeon-hole" the papers or to put them into a drawer, either for consideration in the distant future, or in the hope that future developments might providentially render any consideration unnecessary. One of the Examiners gave such carefully hoarded cases the name of "stinkpots," by which appellation they were always subsequently known. Indeed, there was at no time any hurry about answering letters. If a man had the temerity to write to the Office, we felt that he ought to take his chance of an answer, and the greater the difficulty he was in, and the more necessary an immediate reply was to him, the less likely he was to get it. Besides which, we considered that an early reply would be an inducement to him to continue the

## 22 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

correspondence—a result which was naturally regarded by us as undesirable. Possibly the same practice still obtains in other Offices, but in the later years of my service it had ceased in the Board of Education. It was a practice, however, which in my early days was not confined to the junior officials nor to the Education Department. In the rooms of the assistant Secretaries and Secretary, and in those of similar officials in other Offices with which I was acquainted, might be seen many piles of papers strapped together, waiting for some sudden access of energy on the part of the official responsible for their despatch, or some happy intervention of a *deus ex machina*, which may be rendered “a special Providence.” No doubt such practices still persist in Government Departments, and probably have become even more general during the war.



## V

### INSPECTORS

WE had nothing to do with the Annual General Reports of the Inspectors on the state of education in their respective districts. That was probably a wise arrangement in view of our limited knowledge. The duty of perusing and, if thought necessary, of criticising, those documents was left to the assistant Secretaries. The Reports were, moreover, dull and uninteresting to us, for the Inspectors of those days, unlike their predecessors, were, if not prohibited, yet dissuaded, from supplying anything more than a bald summary of educational facilities and results. In consequence of objections having been successfully raised in Parliament to changes being made in these Reports by permanent officials, the Inspectors were permitted to write anything they pleased, and their remarks were supposed not to be cooked but to be served up to the public without alteration. But the Department quickly devised a method of violating the spirit, while adhering to the letter, of this Inspectorial freedom. No Report was ever altered, but if it contained passages which the assistant Secretary regarded as distasteful or undesirable the Inspector was asked to expunge or alter them himself; and if he refused, the document was suppressed

## 24 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

altogether. There was nothing to compel the Department to publish it at all ; they were only prohibited from *altering*. There were no literary treasures to be found in these Reports. But there were many in the deliverances of their predecessors, which, in our leisure time, we delighted in unearthing. The following is a specimen. It is from the pen of the Rev. H. J. Brookfield, and the date is 1858 :

And here I am tempted to relate a juvenile instance of "the homage which vice pays to virtue," through which, however, instinctive predilection betrays itself with a *naïveté* which may not perhaps alarm your Lordships so much as it appeared to distress the school authorities. It is my custom to ask the children of a first class to write impromptu upon their slates about different subjects which I mention to them, an elephant, a swan, a monkey, etc. To one little boy of eleven years of age I had, perhaps somewhat imprudently, proposed a racehorse. He gave up his slate, inscribed, with very good writing and spelling, as follows :

"The race horse is a noble animal used very cruel by gentlemen. Races are very bad places. None but wicked people know anything about races. The last Derby was won by Mr. I'Anson's Blink-bonny, a beautiful filly by Melbourne, rising four. The odds were twenty to one against her ; thirty started, and she won only by a neck."

I handed this dissertation to one of the managers. He returned it to me with a perplexed look, saying, "I am very sorry indeed for this. He was always a very good little boy *till now*."

I found that he was the son of an honest and industrious groom ; and, notwithstanding the ominous "*till now*," the intelligent and amiable appearance of the child, and the good character I heard of him, give colour to the hope, which charity inclines to cherish, that he may yet clear the treadmill.

•

Nothing of this kind was, however, permitted at the time of which I write, and consequently very few persons, and certainly none of the Examiners, read the General Reports of the Inspectors. We took, however, a great and abiding interest in the personalities of these officials, especially as exhibited in the school reports which we examined. We knew all their peculiarities and fads: how one man took particular interest in the lavatories, another in needlework, and so forth, and how the proficiency of the children in particular subjects dominated their opinion of the school and consequently the amount of grant awarded.

In those early days there was no superior Inspectional authority, and the consequence was that it was almost impossible to effect any proper co-ordination of the standards adopted by the Inspecting staff—such an authority did not exist until 1890. The teachers naturally took good care to sacrifice to the various fads. We knew how one Inspector would write almost always—"excellent as ever," while another, under precisely the same conditions, would recommend a reduction of the grant "for faults of instruction." Another again would usually omit all reference to efficiency, and often write as his whole report—"the children are neat and clean, the walls are painted green, the windows have diamond panes." We even made their various proclivities the subject of an Inspector's Alphabet, of which a future Professor of Poetry (my dear friend the late W. J. Courthope), along with myself and another of his colleagues, were the authors. I know all of it by heart still, but even at this distance of time I do not care to quote it here, as some of the Inspectors

•

## 26 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

whose names are mentioned may still be in existence. I may perhaps, however, mention the last two lines, which did not refer to any individual Inspector, but were probably fairly accurate as regarded the outcome of education under the Revised Code.

“ Y ” is the Youths we would make wise adults,

“ Z ” is the Zanies, the actual results.

The main body of the Inspectors at that time were clergymen, who visited the Church of England schools. The exceptions were the Inspectors of Roman Catholic, Nonconformist, and undenominational schools, who were laymen. The Inspectors of Roman Catholic schools were Roman Catholics, and of Nonconformist schools usually, but not universally, Nonconformists.

The arrangement was necessary so long as the Inspectors had assigned to them the duty of reporting on the religious instruction, but after they had been relieved of that duty by the Education Act of 1870, their reports concerned secular subjects only, and consequently no more clergymen were appointed, nor did the denomination of the Inspector matter. It became possible to avoid overlapping of Inspectors' districts, and to divide the whole of the country into districts according to the amount of population and the number of schools in each. Larger districts were then set up with a staff of three or four, and two fresh classes were instituted—assistant Inspectors and sub-Inspectors, the former consisting of the usual Oxford and Cambridge graduates and the latter of certificated teachers, promoted from the existing class of Inspectors' assistants. The districts were organised in divisions, over each of which a Chief Inspector was supposed to preside. His duty was to keep

the standard of efficiency uniform throughout his division. But, within certain limits, it was his own standard, framed according to his own individual view, and was not co-ordinated with that of the other Chief Inspectors.

The system looked well enough on paper. But many of the Chief Inspectors, who were mostly clergy (having obtained their positions by seniority), and several of whom, in consideration of long service, had obtained one of the coveted London districts, lived in London, and not in their divisions, and only visited the latter at rare intervals. Some of them were even permitted to hold benefices in London, not those requiring any parochial work, but the rich sinecures in the City. Neither the Chief nor the District Inspector was in those days burdened with any afternoon work—he left the duty of looking over children's exercises to his assistants—and, as he had also his Saturdays absolutely free, it cannot be said that he suffered from undue pressure. Any one who happened to be in Waterloo Place about half-past twelve, on any day in the week except Saturday, might have seen a procession of Chief Inspectors wending their way to the Athenæum Club for their lunch and afternoon's rest. These scandals were put an end to in Mr. Cumin's time, but not without a terrible outcry, as might have been expected. The groove was very deep, and it was a laborious and difficult business to lift the Inspectors out of it.

I had personally something to do with bringing about the change. I was deputed by Mr. Cumin to visit some schools with one of the Chief Inspectors who had not joined the majority of his colleagues in their protests against afternoon work, and to ascer-



tain whether it was possible for an Inspector, with the help of an assistant, to take two schools in one day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The Chief Inspector, one of the most honest and straightforward of men (the late Rev. C. F. Johnstone) fully convinced me that if the Inspector knew his business, and employed proper methods of inspection, there was no particular difficulty about it, and I reported accordingly. In the present day, since the individual examination of the children has, or ought to have, ceased altogether, the difficulty should be still less.

Men were then and for long afterwards appointed to Inspectorships, or rather to second Inspectorships (from which they obtained, after a short service, promotion to the higher class), on the old system, without any previous knowledge of education or of elementary schools. Latin, Greek, and Mathematics were still their sole qualifications, and they had to be taught their business by the sub-Inspectors and assistants who, having been certificated teachers, possessed, of course, full knowledge. As an example of what happened in consequence I may relate the following story :

A newly appointed Second Inspector, whom I knew personally, and who himself told me the tale, was pitchforked after the usual fashion into a district in the West of England. He arrived on a Saturday, and, as in duty bound, at once called upon his superior officer, the Inspector of the district. The latter welcomed him effusively, descanting on his own merits and on the hard work he had done recently, while there was a vacancy on his staff. Then he said, "I really have not been able to get a day's *sick leave* for six months, but now that you are come I think

I will take a couple of days on Monday and Tuesday. You can take the schools for me." The unfortunate new man was horrified, and exclaimed that he had never been in an elementary school in his life, and knew nothing about examination or inspection. Said the other—"That does not matter the least; you have only to do what my assistant tells you to do. I am not wanted, and I really want a day or two's holiday." And he took it.

The Chief Inspectors residing in London were instructed to visit their divisions at least once annually (it is to be feared at some considerable inconvenience to themselves), and on one occasion at least such a visit was not without peril. It is recorded that a Chief Inspector, an old and dignified man, whom I well remember, was on his way to a certain country school which his subordinate was inspecting, and was proceeding up the lane leading to the school, when he heard "bang-bang" in an adjoining field, and some pellets of shot went through his hat. He bolted, of course, as fast as his legs would carry him, and on reaching the school asked the teacher who was the dangerous man who was shooting in the next field. Said the teacher, "Oh! that was the Inspector, when he comes here he always brings his gun and has a bang at the partridges on the parson's glebe. His assistant is examining the children all right."

Inspectors were not always of distinguished mien. Tradition has it that one of them, of lofty attainments but of lowly stature and common features, was examining a school when the great lady of the neighbourhood walked in. "Where is Her Majesty's Inspector?" Humbly the teacher indicated the

little man sitting at the desk. "That Her Majesty's Inspector!" said the lady; "I don't believe a word of it," and flung out of the school.

It is stated that another in a rural district used to drive with his assistant to work in the morning, and after depositing the latter at the school was accustomed invariably to go off with the manager to see any objects of interest in the parish church or the locality and to go back at the end of a couple of hours to get the examination papers, which, according to the accepted version, were handed to him by his assistant over the school wall.

Another, who may be supposed to have been an ardent Liberal, was currently reported to have always said his morning prayers before a statue of Hampden, in my opinion a very suitable place for his devotions.

The rural Inspector, when absent from home on his rounds, made a practice of putting up at the house of some school manager, usually a clergyman, who was only too glad to offer hospitality, in the sure hope, as he thought, honest man, of getting a good report of the inspection of his school on the next day, and of afterwards obtaining the substantial grant arising therefrom. The practice paid the Inspector very well, as he saved a considerable proportion, or the whole, of the guinea a night which he received as lodging money when he stayed away from home. Occasionally, however, he happened to have visits to pay to two schools in the same parish, a circumstance which, if one was a church school and the other an undenominational one, sometimes led to trouble and caused him to be suspect, especially if his duty compelled him to give a good report on the former and a bad one on the latter. In one or two

•

cases that I remember, the Nonconformists alleged — but I believe quite without warrant — that the Inspector had been corrupted by the parson's hospitality, and they lodged a complaint against his partiality. Gradually, however, as schools became more numerous, and the Inspectors' districts smaller in area, the necessity of men remaining away from home at night was greatly reduced, and the practice of accepting the hospitality of school managers was discouraged. It was always, in my view, most undesirable, as the host naturally felt himself aggrieved if, after his efforts to give a royal welcome, he found that nevertheless the Inspector had taken Balaam for his model, and had withstood the innocent attempt to put him in good humour and obtain a blessing.

## VI

### THE CLERICAL STAFF

THE clerical staff in those days was recruited by nominations of the Lord President of the Council, upon which followed a so-called qualifying examination. They were not university men, and there was a wide gulf of caste between them and the Examiners. For this reason they were never promoted, though they were constantly agitating for promotion, on what might possibly be thought the legitimate ground that they checked and supervised the work of the Examiners on the Inspectors' reports. They were not, as a rule, the product of the elementary schools of the day, but of the better class of secondary, or grammar, schools.

They abstracted the contents of letters, docketed and registered them; they wrote the letters, got out statistics, kept the books of the Department and the accounts, and, as I have said, checked the work of the Examiners. One of the latter said to me, soon after I was appointed, "You need not bother yourself to be accurate, H. and D. will put you straight." Many a pitfall should we have tumbled into had it not been for H. and D. When either of them arrived in our room with grave and accusing aspect we knew we were in for it, that they would tell one of us, with

a sort of mock humility of manner, that he had paid too much or too little grant, or neglected the Inspector's recommendation respecting some teacher or pupil-teacher, or been guilty of some other vital omission or commission.

They were organised in three classes, and to those in the first of these classes was entrusted the supervision of the junior clerks and of numerous writers in each section of the Office. The Examiners had no duties of supervision. They were so much a class apart, that any such intercourse with mere *clerks* was beneath their dignity. But on the whole the organisation worked pretty efficiently, as the number of the staff was but small, and the Secretary could find time to supervise the clerks and their work as well as the Examiners. Later on, however, as the work of the Secretary and of the Office increased, some of his duties had necessarily to be devolved upon one of the Examiners, who acted as Chief Clerk, and was responsible for the organisation and routine generally.

## VII

### AFTER THE ACT OF 1870

THE Education Act of 1870 made a great difference to the Examiners. Their numbers were doubled, and though the greater part of their work continued to be mechanical, many questions arose under the Act which were not unworthy of their powers of solution. They had also to deal with the general survey of the elementary education of the country, and to decide on the measures to be taken to supply any local deficiency that might exist. There was better work to be done, and it was more interesting, and consequently attendance at the Office became somewhat less lax and casual for a time.

One experience that fell to my lot in connection with the Act was interesting. I was directed by Sir F. Sandford, who had succeeded Sir R. Lingen as Secretary, to attend the first meeting of the School Board for London, and so<sup>1</sup> was present on the occasion when Lord Lawrence was elected Chairman and Mr. Torrens Vice-Chairman. I took the votes and wrote the minutes of the meeting, which were afterwards transcribed into the minute book. Mr. Russell Gurney, the Recorder of London, was also present to act as adviser in any legal difficulty that might occur. Lord Lawrence afterwards called

at the Education Office for the minutes, and very kindly offered to support me, if I cared to become a candidate for the Clerkship of the Board. I considered the offer, and eventually declined it, whether wisely or not I have never been able to decide.

The number of assistant Secretaries was increased, and half a dozen of us were constituted as a new class, that of Senior Examiners, among whom I was included, and by that stroke of luck found myself with a wage of £600 per annum within three years from my first appointment.

The nineteen succeeding years brought little alteration in my status, except appointment as acting Chief Clerk. Those were years mainly of legislative but, unfortunately, not of administrative changes, although gradually some improvements were made in the curriculum of the schools. The Act of 1870 was the parent of numerous other Acts, and the whole country was gradually brought under model bye-laws, either of School Boards or School Attendance Committees, and the compulsion of children to attend school became universal.

Meanwhile the Revised Code remained in force, and at least once in the Annual Report of the Committee of Council, the Lord President and Vice-President actually took credit to themselves for maintaining it in the face of criticism. It is true that under pressure from outside some modifications were made, but the fetters remained round the teachers' necks, and no real elasticity was introduced into the system. The Secretaries during that period were Sir F. Sandford and Mr. Cumin, and both used the full weight of their authority against any interference with the Code. In the end, however,

.



## 36 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

under pressure from the teachers and Parliament, the Government appointed a Royal Commission, which produced its report in, I think, 1888.

That Royal Commission, like others, had the usual effect during the period of inquiry of delaying all change for the better. The Department, when attacked upon its administration, could, and did, always use the fact of the Royal Commission's existence as a reason for doing nothing: and I well remember how greatly it relieved Mr. Cumin from even considering proposals for improvement coming from any quarter. He did not live to carry into effect to any extent the recommendations of the Commission, which task eventually fell to my lot.

In those nineteen years, as I have said, little happened that affected me personally, except that, owing to the disappearance of my seniors from one cause or another, I became the senior of all the Examiners, and my duties became multifarious, including those of acting Chief Clerk.

That position, which involved a general control over the whole staff, was somewhat onerous and difficult, but not without its humorous and interesting side. It was, moreover, perhaps not without its advantage as a training for the position of Secretary, alike in the control which it gave me over the staff, the close acquaintance with the whole organisation which it rendered necessary, and the manner in which it brought me into contact with all sorts and conditions of men.

Among the odd jobs which fell to my lot was that of attending the Law Courts when any case which interested the Department was before the Court. On one occasion a writer was prosecuted on

•

a charge of stealing waste-paper and books belonging to the Office. These things were practically valueless, and it is yet a mystery to me why the Public Prosecutor took any steps in the matter. The unfortunate writer was, I think, hardly *compos mentis*. He appeared to have taken away pieces of waste-paper, heaped them in a corner of his humble lodging, and to have interspersed the heap, curiously enough, with many pence and halfpence, which he had casually thrown there. The latter were, of course, his own property, and the paper was of no value. But he had, unluckily for himself, appropriated a volume or two of old reports and statistics of the Education Department and added them to the heap, and that was apparently a crime which could not be condoned.

The case was heard by Mr. Commissioner Kerr, who had in those days achieved a well-deserved reputation for the rough common sense with which he administered the law. Mr. Geoghagan, who defended, ridiculed the whole proceeding. He shocked the red-tapists present by holding up one of the precious books, and saying, "My Lord, this is what the defendant is accused of stealing. It seems to me absolute rubbish; what earthly use can it be to any one?" Said Mr. Commissioner Kerr, "Hand it up." Then, after looking at it, he said, "Never saw greater rubbish in my life." He charged the jury in these words: "The question is whether the defendant took these things *animo furandi* or not." The jury, who were doubtless as ignorant of Latin as of Chinese, put their heads together. Then the foreman, addressing Mr. Commissioner Kerr with fear and trembling, as if he were approaching a tiger,

said, "My Lord, if you please, the jury would like to know what *animo furandi* means." The Commissioner roughly answered him, "Intention of stealing, of course. Consider your verdict." As might have been expected, the man was happily acquitted, and the treasured volumes of ancient statistics finally passed from the archives of the Board of Education.

I remember that once a very excellent but very old Departmental messenger sought an interview with me, partly to protest against certain indignities he had suffered at the hands of some of the boy messengers, and partly to ask for special leave of absence on the ground of health. After he had seated himself, I asked what he had come about. He replied that he had come to see me about getting sick leave, but, to my great astonishment, added very excitedly that *he knew he was saved*. I said I was glad to hear it, but naturally thought I was dealing with a religious maniac, and took up a very heavy ruler which lay by my side. That seemed to quiet him. He was a very estimable person, and I trust that his anticipations have now been realised.

## SECTION II

*Semper ego auditor tantum ?—JUVENAL.*

IN this Section I have taken such advantage as seems fit of the position of greater freedom and less responsibility which I now occupy so as to tell the unvarnished truth, to criticise certain Ministerial administration and its follies and absurdities, while, it is hoped, causing no heartburning or resentment.

It is surely well that the Public should know how they, so far as education is concerned, have been governed in the past, so that they may be on their guard against the future, may refrain from taking Ministers at their face value, and may understand the difficulties that surround permanent officials who desire, and attempt, to do their duty, and to deal honestly with all men.



## APPOINTMENT AS SECRETARY

AFTER twenty-three years' service as Examiner, I was appointed Secretary of the Education Department by Lord Cranbrook in January 1890, in succession to my dear and valued friend Patrick Cumin. He was a man who had endeared himself to the higher staff of the Office by his great social qualities, and his sudden death was matter of the deepest and truest regret to all those who had been intimately associated with him.

Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit,  
Nulli flebilior quam mihi,

for I was myself perhaps the closest of his official friends. He was not popular outside the Office with those with whom he came in contact in his official capacity; but many of his subordinates, including myself, had learnt to appreciate his many lovable characteristics, and the readiness with which he always placed his knowledge and experience at our service.

As a Liberal and undenominationalist, he was by no means a *persona grata* to the then Parliamentary heads of the Department, and his uniform support of School Boards and Board schools, with perhaps an occasional straining of the law in their favour, led to many unfortunate controversies, which had

## 42 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

probably reached the limit at the time of his death. He was no lover of compromise or promoter of peace, and he did not easily subordinate his personal views to the policy of the Government of the day.

During the latter part of his life, when his health was obviously failing and his energies were impaired, I acted for some months as a sort of unrecognised private secretary to him. I believe he was glad of my assistance, for the Secretary of the Department was not at that time permitted to employ an Examiner as private secretary, and the position was filled by one of the older clerks, who, excellent, loyal, and useful person as he was, could hardly be expected to bring expert knowledge to bear upon the numerous and difficult questions submitted to the Secretary. I was accustomed to go each night to Mr. Cumin's room, after the Office had been technically closed, and the stream of visitors and officials had ceased; and to give what assistance was in my power in putting his work in order, sifting it, and getting it ready for his decisions, and in helping him, so far as I could, to arrive at them. My own work at that time consisted not only in superintending a division of the Examiners concerned with a large section of the North of England, but also in dealing with all educational questions that could not properly be assigned to any particular locality; and, as acting Chief Clerk, in controlling the employment of the whole indoor and outdoor staff, and in enforcing discipline in all the large army of clerks and officials. I was therefore much more familiar with the whole details of indoor and outdoor organisation than even the Secretary, and possessed adequate knowledge to be able to make more or less useful suggestions to

him on any matter of administration, whatever it might happen to be.

I have never known, even to the present day, exactly why I was selected to be Secretary. But from my intimacy with Mr. Cumin I knew well what were the most urgent questions before him at that time, among which were some on which Mr. Cumin differed from Lord Cranbrook (then Lord President), and also from myself. He was greatly worried about his differences with Lord Cranbrook, and there is no doubt that the anxiety he felt had much to do, as an immediate cause, with his sudden death. If I remember rightly, the principal question then at issue was whether the School Board or a Voluntary agency (the Kilburn Sisters) should provide a school to supply a deficiency of accommodation at York. Mr. Cumin held that the School Board were bound to supply it themselves; the Lord President thought that, with the consent of the Board, the Kilburn Sisters might set up a Voluntary school. I was myself of the same opinion as Lord Cranbrook, although educationally and for other reasons I should have much preferred the other alternative.

The private secretaries of Lord Cranbrook and Sir W. Hart Dyke (then Vice-President of the Committee of Council) were aware of my intimate knowledge of the various questions at issue, and probably had much to do with bringing my name prominently forward. One or two of the higher officials, both inside and outside the Office, had sent in applications. I, on the contrary, never solicited that appointment (or, indeed, any other), nor asked any one to use his interest or influence in my favour. I had never even spoken to Lord Cranbrook or Sir W. Hart Dyke,



## 44 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

and I had never acted as private secretary to any Minister. Moreover, I was at the time only as a Senior Examiner (in much the same position as that taken by senior higher-grade clerks in other Offices). There were three assistant Secretaries ranking above me, all men of ability and of high distinction at Oxford or Cambridge, and there were also several well-known, distinguished, and experienced Chief Inspectors. Any one of these men was doubtless capable of filling the position with more or less efficiency. My first intimation that I had been selected came from Mr. (now Sir Almeric) Fitzroy, who was then Sir W. Hart Dyke's private Secretary. He gave me a message to the effect that Lord Cranbrook wished to see me at his house in the afternoon. I went there accordingly, and Lord Cranbrook administered to me a series of interrogatories as to how I thought the various questions that were under his consideration should be settled, and particularly as to the policy I would adopt as regards the points of difference that had arisen between Mr. Cumin and himself. I replied that I was in favour of a policy of conciliation, and that I should think the wisest course would be to try and effect compromises on the burning questions at issue, so as to put an end, as far as was then possible, to the prevailing discord, and to obtain a measure of educational peace. Lord Cranbrook agreed, talked to me on various subjects at some length, and finally told me to go back to the Office and get Sir Charles Peel (then Clerk of the Council) to make out the Order in Council for my appointment.

I was, of course, much pleased, but at the same time I was well aware that the Secretaryship was

likely to be no bed of roses. Inside the Office the assistant Secretaries, all of whom were my seniors, and who had exercised authority over me up to the day when I became Secretary, necessarily required delicate handling when the authority was reversed. They were always, however, loyal, and there was little, if any, friction in consequence of the transformation. Outside the Office the Chief Inspectors, all of whom were years older than myself, and some of venerable age, looked upon me, I think, as an upstart, and as being far too youthful (I was then forty-nine) for my place. But, nevertheless, we got on very well together after a while.

With reference to the Chief Inspectors, I may perhaps mention here that there was an annual farce in those days, called a Chief Inspectors' Conference, over which the Secretary presided, which gave me an early and useful opportunity of meeting them soon after my appointment and explaining the administrative policy I hoped, and intended, to adopt. These conferences were the only occasions on which all of them met together, and they looked forward to them as pleasant reunions at which they might interchange their views, not only on educational but on public and private matters, to their hearts' content. When Mr. Cumin presided he hardly ever attempted to exercise any control over the meeting, and consequently the discussion, so far as it concerned the educational problems set down for solution, was exceedingly funny and futile, for everybody talked at once, and there was a perfect Babel of tongues. I remember to this day the look of astonishment that went round the table at the first conference over which I presided, when I inter-

•

## 46 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

vened as the usual Babel commenced, compelled order, and directed each man to give his views separately, and to stick to business. But, on the whole, they took the interruption of their pleasant conversations extremely well.

Happily, therefore, owing to the tact and discretion of my colleagues generally, I was troubled with no serious difficulties as regarded the staff and their attitude towards me ; my difficulties arose from other causes.

## II

### DIFFICULTIES

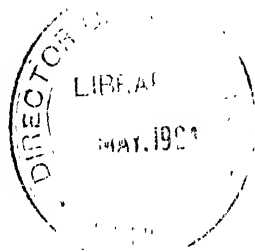
THE question of religion in the schools was a burning one then, as it is still, and as it is likely to continue, though on a different basis; and in numbers of districts the Board and Voluntary systems were at issue. The Revised Code, that nefarious instrument for the stifling of education, which was apparently designed to torture the teachers and to minimise the instruction and intelligence of the children, was in full swing, and the teachers were attacking the Department relentlessly, yet, as I thought, justifiably. There were also many contentious questions pending on the interpretation of the Education Acts, and I was inclined to feel some misgivings whether I should be able to pilot the official ship into smoother waters out of the general turmoil.

That I found it possible was due to the tolerance and consideration of the contending parties, who, almost without exception, realised the position, were content to wait, and ceased for a while to put pressure on the Department. Much of what had to be done in order to obtain peace was in direct opposition to the views my predecessor had entertained and the rules he had laid down; and moreover violated those sacred things "precedent" and

“tradition,” so dear to the official mind, but the assistant-Secretaries and the Examiners fell into line and helped me considerably by adopting the new doctrines and the new policy without any serious protest or criticism. I may mention one curious result of my appointment personal to myself. As an Examiner it had been my duty to refer any difficult question of administration to an assistant-Secretary, who on his part, if he was unable to decide it, referred it onwards to the Secretary. In more than one instance, just after I had entered upon my duties as Secretary, I felt myself compelled to give a decision exactly contrary to the recommendation I had made when referring the case as an Examiner to the assistant Secretary. The Office no doubt laughed. But the reason was, of course, that as an Examiner I was bound by existing practice and policy, which I had no power to change, whereas as Secretary I had a free hand, not being affected by the rulings of my predecessors, and had only to consider the policy of the Parliamentary heads of the Office, and of the Government of the day, and last but not least the interests and welfare of the children and teachers, which heretofore had weighed but lightly in the balance.

The assistance I received from the representatives of all denominations, from the School Board officials, and from the teachers, was invaluable. Representatives of all the various educational bodies called at the Office, doubtless in order to find out what the new man was like, whether he was likely to be moderate and pleasant and just to them, or whether he was the kind of man to chastise them with scorpions. Among my visitors were Archbishop Temple, Cardinal

Manning, several Bishops, Dr. Dale, Dr. Waller, Dr. Rigg, Clerks and Chairmen of School Boards, the Secretaries of the National Society and of the British and Foreign School Society, representatives of the National Union of Teachers, among whom I may specially mention my friend Mr. Heller, and numbers of other persons interested in education. Presumably they were satisfied with their interviews, as afterwards I found that all, without exception, were most considerate and helpful. Indeed I think that from first to last I had no enemies among them.



### III

#### POLICY

IN view of the general discontent that prevailed, it was necessary to consider what should be the attitude to be adopted towards the many different bodies and individuals who had grievances against the Department. I was guided to some extent by the practice of my predecessor, but not for imitation. It was plain enough that the methods which had produced the difficulties should be discarded for others.

Mr. Cumin was a Scotsman, and a canny one. He was too fond of concealing his real intentions from interviewers, and of a procedure which he termed "turning their corner." There appeared to be no advantage in this, it seemed always to lead to friction and never to settlement. It appeared to be a far better plan to be perfectly frank and perfectly fair, and, if the wishes of the person or deputation could not be met, to say so outright, and to give the reason why. People seldom asked for what was impossible—in fact there are few educational difficulties that cannot be solved, if they are attacked with sufficient energy, and with the intention of finding a solution. But plenty of those who came to me asked for what was inexpedient. If their requests were refused, the

refusal was couched in as pleasant language as possible, so that no one should go away empty. I found that it was most important to give the reason—the honest reason—for refusal, so that people might not attribute it to red tape or lack of knowledge or appreciation, but might know that there was adequate reason and solid ground for it.

I was always opposed to what may be called “official dodges.” Mr. Cumin once said to me that if it ever fell to my lot to be examined by the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons and I was asked an awkward question, the best plan was to answer as if it was an entirely different one, and trust to luck that the question was not pressed. When it did fall to my lot, however, I never attempted to defend anything that was really indefensible, and I found the Committee always most considerate. My experience was very useful to me, when, years after, I was myself for three years a member of the Committee.

I set myself to remove, as far as possible, legitimate grievances. The result was that the Office became rapidly in better repute with all its clientele. At the root of all changes made and grievances satisfied lay the benefit and happiness of the children, which demanded more constant thought and attention than could possibly be given in the midst of administrative chaos. My creed was that the children came first, before everything and everybody. *Inter alia* the abolition of cramming, the limitation of home lessons and of the practice of keeping in after school hours, discouragement of excessive corporal punishment, and the substitution of methods of teaching which led the child to good habits and true knowledge



through intelligence and interest, instead of driving him by fear and force, were among the objects which I thought should be attained. I knew that the great majority of the teachers would welcome such a change of policy, and had long desired it. Some, no doubt, were too deep in the old grooves to realise that the new régime had come to stay—at any rate, as long as I was Secretary—and perhaps a few, a very few, actually disliked the change.

The Education Department differed from the ordinary Government Office in that it was necessarily brought into close touch with the interests, home life, and private welfare of an enormous number of individual persons, and therefore it was of the utmost consequence that the usual dull officialdom should be tempered with sympathy and humanity, and that the public at large should feel confidence in the justice of the Department's administration.

## IV

### THE CODE OF 1890

IMMEDIATELY after my appointment, I had to turn my attention to my first important duty, the framing of a New Code of Regulations for elementary schools. No suggestions or memoranda on the subject had been left by Mr. Cumin, but a Royal Commission had recently reported, the demands of the National Union of Teachers had been formulated at their annual conferences, and there was also a sheaf of recommendations from many quarters. On those materials and my personal views I framed the Code, taking care to attack the problems to be solved, as far as possible, along the lines of least resistance, and to feed the reformers with as much as could easily be assimilated, and with sufficient progress to whet their appetite for more.

The Code was based, as far as the actual teaching of the children was concerned, on two main principles. The first was to substitute for the bald teaching of facts, and the cramming which was then necessary in order that the children might pass the annual examination and earn the grant, the development of interest and intelligence and the acquirement of real substantial knowledge. Then, and also in all the changes made in subsequent Codes, the end in view

was to educate the children in such a manner that, instead of becoming temporary repositories of useless so-called knowledge which was immediately forgotten, they might, at the end of their school lives, take something away with them worth having, a training and character which would tend to make them good citizens in after years. Increased brightness in the school, and consequently increased happiness in their work both for the children and the teachers, was also expected from the change. After years of stagnation, it was neither possible nor desirable to vivify completely, as if with the stroke of a magician's wand, the lifeless system which had been indurated into the schools and teachers, but it was possible to reinvigorate it by effective remedies and to commence a treatment which could not but lead to progress, while it was not sufficiently drastic to cause reaction. To use another metaphor, a foundation had to be laid so firm and solid as to invite the hand of the builder, and there was to be no hasty jerry-building on top of it, but a gradually rising structure worthy of the base on which it rested. The public had to be educated.

The second main principle of the Code was the recognition for the first time of the duty of the State to care for the physical welfare of the children, and to make physical culture an integral part of their school life. Physical education, sports and games, out-of-door teaching in fresh air, were therefore encouraged. Both Sir W. Hart Dyke and I knew the advantages of this innovation from personal experience, for we felt that we owed our vigour then, as indeed we owe our continued existence now, to the sports and games and athletic exercises we had

practised in our youth. We can, I think, look back upon what we inserted in the Code of 1890 with considerable pride and satisfaction, for the boys who had the benefit of the new system in that and subsequent years are the main portion of our splendid soldiers and sailors to-day. We may I think justly feel that, if we are now too old to fight ourselves, we did something in our time to help our country to fight to-day. It is too commonly forgotten that it is not the education of to-day, but that of twenty-five years ago, that counted in the war. But I think that though we are never likely to get the smallest recognition for the changes we made, we may at any rate be proud that events have fully justified them, both as regards the character and the physical excellence of our soldiers and sailors. The war was won by them and not by machines. Mr. Lloyd George said that you cannot run an A1 Empire on a C3 population. That fact was present to our minds in 1890, and lay at the root of one of the great principles of the new Code. But we had no power to prevent the physical deterioration due to slums and drink, which are the real and most potent foes of national physical efficiency.

The introduction of physical culture was again but a foundation. It was not all that was wanted --- we knew that well enough,---but it rendered inevitable an increasing solicitude for the health of the children, and eventually led to the medical inspection of schools and scholars, and many other beneficial consequences. Official and public opinion took years to educate, and the final solution did not come during my official life. Nor indeed has it come yet. In one of the later years of my

service, I did, however, dare to suggest to the Duke of Devonshire that, as a beginning, at least one Medical Inspector might be obtained, and that his services might be utilised in special cases, but the Duke, as was customary with him, threw a douche of cold water upon the proposal. But, with some difficulty, I managed to secure one fully qualified medical man (Dr. Eichholz) as a member of the ordinary inspecting staff, and I found his services most valuable.

The Code was technically only a change in the conditions on which the State grant was paid, but in reality it was a revolution in education. It was a basic change of system, and it involved the issue of more humane and more reasonable instructions to the Inspectors of schools, general substitution of inspection of schools without notice for an examination-parade on an appointed day, and greater happiness in their work for both teachers and children. The grant to every school, and, as a corollary, every teacher's salary, was rendered more stable, and consequently the Inspector's visit was not looked forward to with so much financial anxiety as formerly, either by managers or teachers, and there was no special preparation for it, or interruption of the school work.

Under the Revised Code various deductions could be, and commonly were, made from the gross grant awarded. A number of tenths, up to a maximum of five-tenths, might be withheld from the grant on account either of defective premises or of faults of instruction, or for other reasons. One of the articles of the Code dealing with this matter was described, I remember, by Mr. Lingen as being of a "residuary character," by which term he intimated that it was

so comprehensive that it could always be used to inflict a fine, even if there were no specific reason. But the principal grounds for such a penalty were defective buildings and defective instruction, that is to say, the wisdom of the Department prescribed that the worse a school was, the more the means of improving it should be taken away. The larger the amount of money that was needed, the less was given, with the insane idea, I suppose, that slow starvation produces increased vigour. Can any greater folly be imagined?

In the new Code these absurd and mischievous deductions from the grant were swept away, and, instead of schools being slowly bled to death, ample opportunity was allowed to the managers and teachers for making them efficient. There was introduced a system under which no school, however serious its deficiencies might be, lost any portion of its grant. Repeated warning was given by the Inspector, and a special inspection carried out of a very close and searching character, as a safeguard against too hasty condemnation, and then, and only then, if no improvement had taken place, the school ceased to be recognised by the Department and no longer received grants until its defects were remedied. If they were irremediable, a new building had to be supplied, either by a School Board or by voluntary agency, or a fresh teacher had to be appointed, or the staff increased, as the case might be.

For the first time also teachers were allowed freedom in the classification of the children. The Revised Code prescribed that all children were to be advanced one standard each year, and no more. The whole class or standard was to be promoted.

The result was that all had to be taught up to the same dead level, and the clever children had to mark time while the stupid were being pushed or crammed. Any greater waste of the time and energies of the teacher, or anything more disheartening to him could hardly have been invented. This silly provision was also swept away by the New Code.

One of the principal difficulties was to satisfy the advocates of special treatment of a host of particular subjects such as History, Geography, Natural Science, Music, Drawing, Needlework and Domestic Economy for girls, and others. Those enthusiasts seemed to forget the fact that children can only be taught for a limited number of hours each day, and that a large part of this time had necessarily to be devoted to such essential subjects as the three "R's," and that room had also to be found for physical exercises.

It was impossible to please everybody, but, as far as might be, all subjects that were not merely ornamental were worked into the curriculum in such a manner as, it was hoped, not to overburden the teachers. Critics may say, perhaps justly, that under such a system the children only obtain a smattering of knowledge; but that result was inevitable, so long as attendance at school ceased to be compulsory at the very age when the intelligence is beginning to ripen. For that matter, all knowledge that any children acquire in their school days is in a sense a smattering; but that is immaterial, if it is what may be called a good, sufficient, and interesting smattering leading to voluntary acquisition of knowledge in maturer years, which after all only widens the range of the smattering.

## V

### A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL, AND THE CODE IN PARLIAMENT

THE framing of the Code produced a phenomenon—the only meeting of the Committee of Council on Education that I remember. The Committee of Council was as absurd a body as the Board of Education is in the present day. It was composed of a number of Ministers, hardly any of whom knew anything about education or educational administration. The Committee of Council were, and the Board of Education are, mere fictions designed to meet the views of Treasury red-tapists. Lord Cranbrook, however, considering that the Code was so revolutionary a document as to require the strongest sanction possible, called a meeting of the Committee. It was an extremely odd, and very perfunctory, proceeding. The Code, or part of it, was read out to the Committee by Lord Cranbrook, but apparently few of them understood it or took the smallest interest in it. Lord Salisbury, however, who was present, by way, I suppose, of saying something, criticised an article which provided that a proper supply of lavatories should be supplied for the use of the children. He insisted on a reduction of the grant if the school lavatories were out of repair.



As he was Prime Minister, there was nothing for it but to gratify his wish, and the alteration was duly made. (But it was wholly opposed to the spirit of the Code, which had abolished all reductions of the grant, and was afterwards removed from it at the first opportunity.) Lord Cranbrook then took alarm, as he obviously feared that if the Committee began really to consider the Code in detail, they might from sheer ignorance play havoc with it. So he said that there was nothing more of importance, and as Lord Salisbury was in a hurry, the meeting ended. Lord Cranbrook was obviously delighted that we had got off so cheaply.

The Code was presented to Parliament, and was debated on the Education Estimates. I was in attendance under the gallery. The discussion on the Estimates was preceded by one on the question whether Parliament should adjourn over Derby Day. The greatest interest was taken in the debate, and the House was full to overflowing, as if the issue was of vital importance to the State. The speeches were clever and amusing. The moment, however, the result of the division was known, members rose like a covey of partridges, and the House emptied, education being neither interesting nor amusing. Only a select few remained (less than thirty, I think) to hear Sir W. Hart Dyke move the Estimates and explain the Code.

Sir W. Hart Dyke dealt with the Code in an admirable speech bristling with facts and explanations, and meanwhile the small company of members sat, each with his Code in his hand, and when Sir W. Hart Dyke called attention to any particularly important point, there was a great rustling of papers and

turning over of pages, which reminded me sharply of a class of schoolboys receiving a lesson. There was no serious criticism, nor any division, and the Code went through. Probably very few of those present realised the far-reaching character of the apparently innocent innovations that were contained in it.

It was well received by the public, and, generally speaking, people who were interested in education approved it, as embodying real and reasonable reform.

## VI

### THE RECEPTION OF THE CODE BY THE TEACHERS, AND SUBSEQUENT RELATIONS WITH THEM

THE National Union of Teachers naturally, however, accepted the Code with a little hesitation. It was some time before the teachers, as a body, could be brought to believe that, after years of spying and suspicion, the Department really intended to trust them; and they were afraid that the Code was intended only to stop their mouths, and that the old fetters might still remain fastened round their necks. It must be remembered that they were outraged, not only by the provisions of the Revised Code, but also by the treatment they had received from the Department. The National Union, which had already become a large and powerful body, was not "recognised," and the Department pretended to ignore its very existence. The officials were forbidden to correspond with the secretary of the Union, and if he brought forward any complaint on behalf of a teacher, he was actually told to prefer it through the managers of his school, and no further notice was taken of his letter. Pin-pricks were lavished upon the teachers and their Union with a profligacy which caused utter detestation of the Department.

It was of course not possible to alter all this and to gain the confidence of the teachers (which was indispensable) without a complete and sustained change of policy. But it was obvious that the first thing to be done was to enter into direct relations with the teachers by recognising the Union and its officers.

It seemed to me that, for the Department to ignore an existing and powerful fact, such as the Union undoubtedly was (whether the Department liked it or not), was just as absurd as for railway companies to refuse to recognise the Trade Unions of their employees. Indeed, it was more absurd, for the teachers were not, and still are not, technically employed by the State. I went accordingly to Lord Cranbrook and placed the matter before him, and he, with his usual good sense, agreed without demur. I have never regretted this step. The teachers understood it, and rightly, as a sort of material guarantee that their complaints and their status would at any rate meet with consideration. They accordingly adopted a policy of "wait and see." Mr. Pope, the protagonist of the teachers, who, when he was President of the Union, had made very violent attacks upon the Department and my predecessor, came to see me. He told me that he was going to put his armour off and "give me a chance." I said, "That is just as you please. I don't ask you to take your armour off, and I won't promise anything. If you attack me, I can defend myself. I shall simply do what I consider right and just." I think he liked that kind of reception of his overtures. We had many talks together subsequently, and he became eventually one of my dearest and

.

best friends among the teachers. I deeply regret that he has now passed away. But he had the satisfaction of living long enough to see the triumph of all that he had fought for so strenuously and bravely.

It was only natural that the teachers should have been for a while suspicious of the new broom, as they knew that I had been officially brought up at the feet of those Gamaliels, Lord Lingen and Lord Sandford, the former one of the authors, and the latter the strong supporter, of the Revised Code. Nor did the part Mr. Cumin played in my official education give them any more confidence. I remember that, when speaking at a distribution of prizes at West Ham soon after the new Code was published, I said that "I hoped and believed that the day would come when the teacher's face would brighten as he saw the Inspector coming round the corner!" Then a teacher among the audience called out, "That will only come with the millennium." Speaking at a luncheon at a training college, I said that I felt that the key of the situation was to put trust in the teachers; and a prominent member of the Union, an ex-president, who was present and spoke after me, declined to believe it, and I think some fun was made of the incident in the educational journals of the day. But I did trust the teachers always, and I never found my trust misplaced.

From that day until I finally left the Office, my relations with the teachers constantly grew more cordial and intimate, and I owed to the advice of the Union officials, and the expressions of opinion and the resolutions passed at the Union Conferences, numerous and excellent suggestions for the improve-

ment, from time to time, of Departmental regulations. More than that, I should like to bear witness to the fact that, while, of course, desiring continually to better their position—which is, even at the present day, still far below what it ought to be—what the teachers suggested was always, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of the children as well as themselves. I have constantly, indeed, held the view, and I believe it to be perfectly correct, that, without exception, every improvement in the position and status of the teacher is good for the education of the children. A happy and contented teacher makes a happy and contented school, and the progress of the scholars depends largely on the facilities given to the teacher for instructing them. In “facilities” I include a living wage to the teacher, and a well-constructed, convenient, and sanitary school building. Starved and ill-paid teachers, stagnating without prospects of proper promotion, teaching in an unhealthy atmosphere, and entitled only to inadequate pensions after long and trying service, can hardly be expected to show any great energy or interest in their work; and I, for one, have often wondered at their unselfish devotion to duty, even under the most adverse circumstances.

I was once appealed to by the managers of a school in Monmouthshire to save them from what they called the injustice of an Inspector who had condemned the school building. I happened to be spending a holiday in the locality, and I thought I would have a look at the building and see whether it was the children’s palace that the managers represented it to be. Both managers and head teacher met me; the latter looked as if he were in a con-

sumption, and from what I afterwards saw, he might easily have been really in that condition, considering the building in which he had to teach. I looked over it. It was composed of three cottages thrown into one, very narrow and dark, the only light coming from windows with thick diamond-shaped panes, which were at the back of the children, who were consequently all compelled to sit in their own light; and, to make matters worse, a climbing rose tree was trained over the windows. The managers said that they could not possibly cut it down, as it was a beautiful Gloire de Dijon! The schoolroom was crowded, stuffy, and insanitary; the offices were at the end of a long path which the children had to traverse, rain or fine, and the managers told me with honest pride that the accommodation was so ample that cleaning was not required more than once in six years! I was asked whether I did not think it a beautiful old school, and I replied that the wonder was that it had survived the infirmities of old age so long. The managers then turned on me and said, "We beat the Department in 1870, and we are going to beat you again." However, I put the machinery of the Department in motion, and in the course of a year, "in order to avoid a School Board," a new building was provided, and on visiting the school again I was surprised at the change for the better in the looks of both children and teacher.

I was always absolutely frank with the teachers and with the officials of the Union. I never said one thing to their faces and another behind their backs, nor did I ever write anything respecting them in an official minute which I should have had any objec-

tion to them reading. Perhaps I may illustrate this point by a concrete instance.

One of the principal matters that came up for discussion between the Union officials and myself was the protests of members of the Union whose teaching certificates had been suspended or cancelled by the Department. The offences which called for such a procedure were wonderfully few in proportion to the vast number of teachers, and I am glad to be able here to pay a tribute to the high standard of morality and honour among them. But in so large a body there were necessarily a few black sheep, as there are in all other professions.

Before Sir John Gorst came into office the responsibility for cancelling or suspending certificates always rested with the Vice-President, after receiving the advice of the Secretary. But for some not very intelligible reason Sir John declined to have anything to do with such decisions, and transferred the whole burden of responsibility to my shoulders. I think he said that he was too tender-hearted to decide anything affecting a man's livelihood, and also that if he undertook the duty he would have to consult legal authorities in every case! Considering that he had been Solicitor-General, this last seemed a somewhat queer reason. However that may be, he shuffled the duty on to myself, possibly with the hope and expectation that I might get into trouble.

When the teacher who had offended happened to be a member of the Union (as he was in the great majority of cases), he usually complained to the Union of the injustice (as he considered it) inflicted on him, and then the secretary, Mr. (now Sir J.) Yoxall, came to see me and to inquire into the facts.



My invariable practice was to send for all the papers relating to the matter, and ask the secretary to sit down and read them, and then discuss the merits of the case if he saw any cause to differ from the decision. The whole evidence was in the official papers, and nothing was withheld. I was always as lenient as possible, but I held the view, and often expressed it to the Union secretary, that in a really bad case it was better for the Union itself that the man should lose his certificate than continue to disgrace an honourable profession, and I think the secretary fully agreed. I am glad to say that, as far as I can remember, on no single occasion did his verdict, after he had read the whole of the evidence and discussed it, differ from my own.

One very important administrative reform to which Lord Cranbrook assented, on my suggestion, was the appointment of a Senior Chief Inspector, which was absolutely necessary for the equalisation and co-ordination of standard, and for the protection of managers, teachers, and children against too harsh or unfair judgments. It was not an easy place to fill, as it required not only a man who was fair and just, but one who was free from red tape who would give full weight to any adverse conditions or surroundings which affected prejudicially the school or the teacher, and whose character and reputation commanded respect for his authority and decisions. There were at the time several Chief Inspectors, each having a certain control over the Inspectors in a large area, but there was no one who had power to co-ordinate the various standards of efficiency which they favoured, or to act as an appeal court in specially

difficult questions relating to inspection and the teachers. Having for some time had the administrative control of the outdoor staff, I had long seen that a kind of ultimate inspectorial authority in such matters was required, and I asked Lord Cranbrook's permission to send a letter to the Treasury requesting sanction to a moderately increased salary for a Senior Chief Inspector. He agreed; and a letter was accordingly written to the Treasury. No answer. Several further letters were sent, with the same result. At last my patience was exhausted, and I went to Lord Cranbrook again and told him that I was quite unable to move the Treasury. He was, happily, a Minister of strong character, and he said, "Write to the Treasury, and say that I have determined that this appointment is absolutely necessary, and that if they do not reply I shall have to consider my position." The same day that the letter was sent the Secretary of the Treasury came to my room in some perturbation and agreed, without demur, to give what we wanted. The tale is illustrative of Treasury methods in those days.

The Rev. T. W. Sharpe was selected. He was one of the Church of England Inspectors appointed before the passing of the Act of 1870, but he was a very practical and excellent man, and a very unclerical cleric, and consequently he filled the position admirably for several years. There was no man on the staff in whom greater trust could be justly placed, and he invariably managed to solve the many difficult and contentious questions which arose, with a tact, judgment, and good temper which were beyond praise. Towards the end of his service he was given a C.B., an honour which he fully deserved. I think that he

## 70 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

was either the first or the second clergyman who had ever obtained that distinction.

It came to him from the Liberal Government of 1892, and with regard to it he told the following story which I hope is true, but which is at any rate *ben trovato*: When he received the gold lozenge, which is the decoration of the Companionship of the Order of the Bath, he noticed that it was cracked. He naturally thought he would prefer a sound one, so he applied to the people who issued it (whoever they might be). He got a reply to the effect that of course they would gladly change it for him, but that it was the last gold one they had in stock, the Liberal Government of the day having, from motives of economy, ordered that in future these lozenges should be silver-gilt !

## VII

### THE FREE EDUCATION ACT

As soon as the Code was safely off the stocks another problem presented itself, the solution of which has already led (like the New Code) to consequences far beyond the purview and intention of the Government that accomplished it.

The story of the Free Education Bill is indeed what *Truth* would call a "queer" story. The Bill had its origin, not in any desire of the Government to relieve the working man of payment towards the education of his children, but in electioneering necessities, like nearly all, if not all, other Education Bills. It was, as a matter of fact, a sheer betrayal of Conservative principles, for it was a socialistic measure, placing upon the State the whole burden of the parent, so far as the school-fee was concerned. It was a bribe to the working classes, but, like other bribes, it failed conspicuously in effecting its object.

In the autumn of 1890 Lord Salisbury made two speeches, at Newport and Nottingham, in which he vaguely promised, not "free" but "assisted" education. Nothing, probably, was further from his intention than the introduction and passing of such a sweeping measure as was eventually placed upon the Statute Book.

Later in the same autumn Lord Cranbrook discussed with me Lord Salisbury's speeches, and suggested that a Bill should be framed providing for "assisted" Education. I asked him at once whether Lord Salisbury intended the Department to work out his vague promises in any way they pleased, or whether he had in his mind any definite plan. Lord Cranbrook said then that he believed that Lord Salisbury had a very definite plan. I replied that, if that were the case, it would be mere waste of time to draft a Bill which would probably be unacceptable to Lord Salisbury, and that I thought we needed guidance before proceeding further.

A Conference was accordingly arranged, at which Lord Cranbrook, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Goschen (then Chancellor of the Exchequer), and I were present. I shall never forget that Conference, which, and the result of which, exhibited in the most glaring light the danger of a Minister, especially a Prime Minister, talking about what he does not understand, and promising he knows not what. The plan that Lord Salisbury had in mind turned out to be simple enough. He proposed that every Inspector, when visiting a school, should take with him a bag of postal orders of varying amounts, and hand one to every child who had attended a certain proportion of the meetings of the school. Not the necessitous, but the punctual, child was to be "assisted." The "assistance" was to be a prize for punctuality, an inducement to attend regularly, an endowment for the well-to-do parents, who can always send their children to school more regularly than the poorer working men.

The Prime Minister, having promulgated this piece of profound wisdom, waited for assent and apprecia-

tion. It would have been very much to *my* interest, at any rate, to have given both. A permanent official always finds it to his advantage to toady a Minister, especially a Prime Minister. But I fear I was not equal to the occasion. It may perhaps be considered to stand to the credit of all those present at the Conference that the proposal was received in absolute silence. It was so entirely unexpected, and so ridiculously fatuous, that for the moment no one had an answer ready. Goschen then asked the cost, which of course it was impossible to give without statistics, which were obviously not available. Lord Cranbrook, having got over the first shock, politely pointed out various objections. I, on my part, humbly asked whether the infants were to have the postal orders as well as the older children (pointing out that some were three years old or less), and whether Lord Salisbury thought that the children generally could be trusted with them. I added that I thought that the free scattering of money to the children at every Inspector's visit would probably cause the day to be celebrated by some of the parents with undue festivity, and that it would be difficult to secure the safe transmission of the postal orders to the parents.

Lord Salisbury obtained not a word of approbation for his preposterous scheme, and finally got up and left the room in a hurry saying that he had no more time to waste over the matter and that, if Lord Cranbrook would not accept the plan, he had better devise another. The net result of the Conference was that Lord Cranbrook, Sir W. Hart Dyke, and I had a free hand to suggest any plan we pleased for the distribution of a large grant in aid of school fees.

•

The duty of discovering and formulating some method of doing this was entrusted to me, and I accordingly wrote a minute, which I suppose is still extant at the Board of Education, for the consideration of Lord Cranbrook and Sir W. Hart Dyke, taking the bull by the horns and suggesting Free Education for all children without exception as the only possible way out of the difficulty which Lord Salisbury had created. This minute was subsequently approved by Lord Cranbrook and Sir W. Hart Dyke, and a Bill embodying it was framed and laid before the Cabinet.

I consulted many people and was told by all of them that the solution of the problem of Free Education was impossible, the main difficulty being the great variety of fees charged in the different schools. That was got over by permitting the managers of high-fee'd schools to charge the excess fee over threepence per week—threepence per week being the average fee paid in all Public Elementary schools, and being equal to an annual fee of ten shillings per head, which was the amount proposed to be provided by the grant. For the suggestion which led to this solution I was indebted to the late Mr. Lewis Williams, the then Chairman of the Cardiff School Board, whose assistance was most valuable.

It was evident that a payment of a flat rate per child in all schools was the only fair and logical method by which a grant in aid of fees could be distributed. It was impossible to make a difference in the amount of aid, between school and school, parent and parent. It was also obvious that the basis of the grant would have to be the average fee, that is to say, threepence per week. That meant full relief from school fees in every school the managers

of which charged threepence per week or less. In the latter case, that is to say, where the fee charged had been twopence or one penny, the balance increased the income of the school, and went probably in reduction of voluntary subscriptions, which was fair enough, because by charging less than the average fee the voluntary subscribers appeared in such cases to have taken upon themselves part of the ordinary burden of the parents. It followed that, as the school charging a sixpenny or ninepenny fee was, as a rule, no better than that charging a threepenny fee as regarded educational advantages, the parent of a child in that class of school could not be *compelled* to pay the excess fee over threepence simply because he lived in an area served by a high-fee-charging school. It was necessary that all parents should be placed in the same position and that none should pay any fee whatever unless they desired to do so as a voluntary contribution to the school.

Few, if any, Voluntary schools charged a high fee with the object of applying the proceeds to the improvement of the teaching and appliances. As a rule (but with certain exceptions, such as the Wesleyan schools) such fees were charged in cases where the voluntary contributions had fallen off or disappeared, and the managers therefore, rather than put their hands in their own pockets, had transferred the burden of support from the backs of the subscribers to those of the parents.

It was an easy process. The children were compelled to attend school. The parents were compelled to pay the fee. The managers could charge what fee they pleased up to ninepence per week, which was the limit fixed by the Education Act of 1870. The



whole arrangement was grossly unjust, especially in the poorer localities. The Free Education Act put a stop once and for all to these proceedings. It is true that the Act allowed fees to be increased. But that provision was safeguarded by enacting that the additional fee should be within the means of the parents, that there should be sufficient free places in the district, that additional educational advantages should be offered, and that the assent of the Education Department should be given. These were very drastic and sufficient safeguards.

Some schools, mostly Wesleyan, had always charged a high fee, because, though there were few people belonging to their respective denominations in the districts served by such schools who were able to give substantial subscriptions, the clientele of the schools consisted mainly of well-to-do artisans who were ready and willing to keep them going by paying in the shape of a fee what was really a voluntary contribution. It was assumed that those schools would not suffer, because there was no reason to suppose that the parents would not continue to pay the reduced fee.

But clearly, in order to place every parent on the same footing it was essential to provide that all, without exception, could obtain remission of their whole fee, if they so desired. Accordingly, a clause was introduced into the Bill giving every parent the absolute right to demand a free place for his child; and the method of conferring on him this right was obviously to enact that, in the case of districts where there was a deficiency of *free* places (shown by the demands of the parents), the same procedure should be adopted as had been previously applied under the

Education Act of 1870 to districts where there was a deficiency of ordinary school places, *i.e.* that in the last resort a School Board should be set up to provide the free places required.

The Government was driven by logical necessity to pass a measure, of which they could hardly have approved and of which Lord Salisbury certainly never dreamed when he made his ill-considered speeches. The absolute right of every parent to free education for his child was originally stated in the first clause of the Bill, but Lord Salisbury objected that if it were so placed it would be a "French declaration of policy," which he particularly disliked. So, before the Bill was introduced into the House of Commons, there was an attempt to conceal the right by putting it into a proviso tagged on to another clause. A more futile effort to hide the head of the offence against Toryism in the sand could hardly be conceived; and, as might have been expected, when the Bill was in Committee the proviso was made into a separate clause and became the dominant clause of the Bill.

The Bill went through various drafting stages, was considered by a Cabinet Committee and the Cabinet, and I was under the impression that it had been approved. One day, however, Lord Cranbrook, coming from a Cabinet Council, sent for me, placed in my hands the heads of an entirely different Bill, and requested me to get the Parliamentary Draftsmen to formulate a new Bill. He said that this new Bill was suggested by Lord Salisbury as an alternative, and directed me to bring copies of it to the adjourned Cabinet the next day together with a supply of drafts of the original measure. The details of the new Bill

.

have escaped my memory, except that it provided that the County Councils should distribute the grant. I remember that the scheme was one to utilise the County Councils, which is an interesting fact, in view of the subsequent transfer to them of local educational administration by the Act of 1902. The impression on my mind at the time was that Lord Salisbury had taken alarm at the socialistic character of the original Bill.

I arranged for the printing of Lord Salisbury's Bill and then wrote a memorandum, practically a speech, setting out in detail the objections to it, and took it to Lord Cranbrook's house the same evening; and I attended the Cabinet the next day. Eventually, the original Bill was accepted by the Government, but I doubt whether many of the Ministers, with the exception of Lord Cranbrook, Mr. W. H. Smith and Sir W. Hart Dyke, knew what the Bill actually provided, notwithstanding the numerous memoranda that had been circulated, and many meetings of a Cabinet Committee. Indeed, one Cabinet Minister, who was himself a member of the Cabinet Committee, sent for me, when the Bill was before the House of Lords, in order to be coached for a speech in favour of the Bill, which he desired to deliver in that Chamber. But, on learning that every parent was given an absolute right, conferred in the strongest possible manner, to demand free education for his child, he declared that he had no idea that such a right was part of the Bill and that he was quite unable to speak in favour of it.

So indisposed were the Government to disclose the fact that the Bill actually gave the parent such an absolute right that Sir W. Hart Dyke (doubtless

acting under instructions) when he introduced the Bill in the House of Commons said not a word on the subject. Why this policy of slurring over the very basis of the measure was pursued I do not know, considering that the truth was bound to come out as soon as the Bill was printed and circulated. Possibly the Government thought that time was required for the education of their party. But the result was that Mr. Chamberlain, then sitting as a Liberal Unionist on the front Opposition Bench, rose and criticised the Bill unfavourably, because, as he naturally inferred from Sir W. Hart Dyke's speech, it omitted to provide for free education for all children. Upon that, Sir W. Hart Dyke jumped up, crossed the floor, and showed Mr. Chamberlain a draft copy of the Bill. I am aware that it was said at the time that the Bill was practically Mr. Chamberlain's own, and that he had had a large hand in framing it. As a matter of fact he had nothing to do with it, and he never saw it until the incident which I have described happened: an incident which would never have occurred had Mr. Chamberlain been conversant with the details of the measure. After its real import was thus laid bare, I remember being told by many Members of Parliament that it would not pass its second reading, I replied that I thought it would, and that there would not even be a division. In that I was wrong, for about a dozen members went into the lobby against the Bill, but the paucity of its opponents showed that by that time the Tory Party had been educated, and that they preferred, as both parties under similar circumstances always prefer, to be false to their own party traditions rather than offend their constituents, or imperil the Government.

•

The Bill was carried through Committee in a masterly manner by Mr. W. H. Smith, who then led the House, and Sir W. Hart Dyke. And here I may perhaps be permitted to say that, of all the many Cabinet Ministers I have known, there has been no one who, in my opinion, has equalled Mr. Smith in strong common sense, grasp of detail, and perfect knowledge of his subject. The Bill was of a necessity highly technical, and while it was in Committee I used to go, early each afternoon, to Mr. Smith's house in Grosvenor Gardens, and discuss with him all the amendments that were likely to be reached the same evening. He was very unlike some Ministers I have known, who, when some highly technical point has been explained to them, have left it before fully understanding it, from unwillingness to expose their lack of knowledge or acuteness. Mr. Smith was very different in his methods. If he did not understand he was never ashamed to say so; he asked for further information, until in the end he fully understood the object of every amendment and the arguments for and against it, and was never at a loss in answering criticisms in the House of Commons. He was, of course, no orator; but I have no hesitation in saying that he was one of the ablest Ministers with whom I have had official relations. He was, moreover, always courteous and considerate, and I remember those interviews with him with pleasure. Yet all his excellent work on this Bill was done when he was already suffering severely from the illness of which he shortly afterwards died. He used to sit in the House of Commons with a rug over his knees and looking extremely ill, and I greatly admired his self-sacrifice and devotion to duty.

.

When the Bill was through Committee and the report stage, all difficulties ended. If I remember rightly, there was no division on its third reading and the Lords, as was their wont, registered it, as they did all Tory Bills, practically, if not entirely, unaltered. No one in that Chamber appeared to realise that it was the most socialistic measure ever introduced by any Government, and that many of the arguments in its favour were equally applicable to further developments on similar lines. It was not, indeed, the beginning of socialism applied to education—that may be found in the first State grants, and in the rate-aid prescribed by the Education Act of 1870. But it crowned the edifice by transferring to the State the whole burden of the individual parent. The principal argument in its favour was that, since the State had compelled parents to send their children to school, thereby imposing on them a new duty, the State was bound to pay the cost of the performance of that duty. A similar argument applies to the feeding and clothing of children. It is useless to compel them to go to school if they are starved or shivering, for then their instruction is mere waste. Accordingly, twenty years after the passing of the Free Education Act, it has been supplemented by legislative provision for the feeding of school children. In less than twenty years more, similar provision will be made for clothing them. Let us hope that at the same time the final step will be taken of clearing out tenements and hovels, and that municipalities will be compelled to provide decent houses, so that our children can go to school healthily clad, fed, and housed, to enjoy, it may be hoped, the benefits of an even more reasonable

## 82 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

system of early training than is in force at the present day.

In conclusion, I may say that I think the people of this country owe a deep debt of gratitude to Lord Cranbrook and Sir W. Hart Dyke. Their work on the Bill was above criticism, and had it not been for their clearness of insight, strong common sense, and full appreciation of the position throughout, the solution arrived at would have been impossible.

## VIII

### THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT OF 1892 AND CIRCULAR 321

IN 1892 a Liberal Government came into office. Mr. Arthur Acland became Vice-President of the Committee of Council, and for the first time in the history of the Office, the Vice-President had a seat in the Cabinet. As a consequence of this innovation, he undertook the entire control of the Department, and Lord Kimberley and Lord Rosebery (who were successively Lord-Presidents of the Council) did little more than represent it in the House of Lords. The double control happily disappeared for the time being. No difficulty arose from it in the time of the previous Ministry, for there was practically no disagreement between Lord Cranbrook and Sir W. Hart Dyke. But the difficulties were emphasised under the succeeding Ministry, when the Duke of Devonshire and Sir John Gorst, that extraordinarily ill-assorted pair, attempted to run in double harness.

Mr. Acland, with the best will in the world, had few opportunities of effecting drastic improvement in any direction. He was hampered throughout his term of office by the Parliamentary position. The majority of the Liberal Government in the Commons was never more than forty, and it was constantly



being reduced by bye-elections. The Tory and denominational majority in the House of Lords was, as ever, overwhelming. Consequently he was not in a position to undertake any contentious legislation. He made, however, the most of such opportunities as he had.

By his direction, the Department ventured to issue a circular to the Inspectors directing them to report upon the school buildings throughout the country, with a view to their improvement as regarded sanitation and convenience for teaching purposes.

There was nothing new about the requirements of the circular—the regulations of the Code had justified them for years past; but little had been done to enforce them, owing to the predominance in Parliament of the supporters of Voluntary schools, which the Department found it therefore necessary to touch with a very light hand. Half-hearted attempts to improve the buildings had been frequently made, but had always met with influential opposition, and had therefore, as a general rule, failed. In the time of Lord Cranbrook, for instance, one of the most vigorous Inspectors reported that in a city in the North of England there were a number of what he called “basement” schools. There were, I found, a good many of them. They were beneath the level of the street; artificial light had always to be employed, in summer as well as in winter; if the windows were open the dust from the street poured in; if they were shut there was practically no ventilation, and, in fact, the buildings were wholly unsuitable for teaching purposes and insanitary. They were places where no efficient education was possible, and which were apparently maintained wholly for the sake of

denominational instruction, at the expense of sacrificing the health of the teachers and children, and the education of the latter. They were a gross scandal. With the assistance of the Inspector, I organised an attack upon them. The Inspector condemned them, and I supported him. We were in good hope of clearing out these abominable anachronisms, and of seeing them replaced by sanitary and efficient Board schools. But directly our proceedings became known to the denominationalists in the city, they were furious. They organised a deputation, politically powerful, and fervidly religious. The Parliamentary representation of the city was mainly Tory, and the Tory members of Parliament were all, or nearly all, included in the deputation. They were an important political asset. They submitted their grievances in strong language to Lord Cranbrook. He was not particularly impressed nor sympathetic, but finally party considerations compelled him to give way, and to direct that the case of these schools should be reconsidered. In the result we were only able to deal with a few of the worst of them, and even in those cases all we could do was to limit the number of children accommodated to that which could be taught in the parts of the rooms which were near the windows, so that they got the benefit of such light and ventilation as existed. Possibly some of these "basement" schools are still in existence, and still calling for extinction.

Mr. Acland's circular was very moderate in tone. But it produced a great disturbance. Bishops held meetings and denounced the Department, which was freely accused of trying to get rid of Voluntary schools and "religious" education through a side door. The

actual fact was that the denominationalists had a rooted objection to putting their hands in their pockets. The voluntary subscriptions for maintenance had been falling off for years, and they felt that it was too bad that the burden that had been got rid of should be reimposed upon them for building alterations. Of course, the improvements aimed at by the circular cost money. One of them, for instance, was the provision of a classroom, another that of a cloak-room, in every school. In a very large number of cases, the hats and caps, coats and cloaks of the children were hung up on the walls of the schoolroom, the effect of which, especially on a wet day, made the atmosphere pestilential. In an equally large number there was no classroom, and all classes (including the infants) had to be taught in a Babel of sound, which effectually nullified the efforts of the teacher, and destroyed his voice by his endeavours to cope with it.

There were serious difficulties to be faced. It might happen, and did in fact happen, that all, or nearly all, the schools of one denomination in some large, poor, and populous area, required considerable sums of money to be spent upon them, before their buildings could be passed as efficient, and that the amount required was more than the locality could reasonably be expected to provide. In such cases it was found necessary to reduce what we asked for to the lowest common measure. In other cases strong influence was brought to bear, political or aristocratic. For instance, the wife of a rich peer, who had held high positions, and who subsequently became a Cabinet Minister, implored me almost on her knees to withdraw a mandate for the addition of a porch,

to a small country school. The porch was asked for as a means to enable the children to hang their coats, cloaks, hats, and caps outside the schoolroom, was a cheap substitute for a cloakroom, and would have cost about twenty-five pounds! Even Archbishop Temple, reasonable man as he usually was, when speaking at the opening of a Voluntary school at which I was present, denounced the Department. I followed him and defended, possibly in somewhat strong terms; and the Princess Mary of Teck, who opened the school, and probably also our present Queen, who accompanied her, were greatly amused by the passage of arms between the Archbishop and myself. As for the Archbishop, I think he rather liked being hit back, and, at any rate, we left the school together, and discussed the position in the most amicable manner possible.

The Inspectors to whom the duty of reporting was entrusted presented another difficulty. That duty, after so many years of slackness—winked at, if not encouraged by the Department—was a delicate one. Inspectors often had to condemn what they had passed for years, and to press for alterations which they had never suggested or hinted at before. It was by no means easy for them, under the circumstances, to raise suddenly the standard to which they had so long been accustomed, and which they had always accepted as sufficient. They were a loyal body of men, and they complied generally with the spirit if not with the letter of the circular, but they doubtless made considerable allowances—from a certain point of view, quite justly—and the result was that the improvement in the buildings demanded

- by the circular was not universally carried out.

Though the outcry proceeded chiefly from the Church of England, the fact, of course, was that the circular was not directed against the schools of any particular denomination, but against all bad schools, whether denominational or undenominational. There were many Roman Catholic schools, numerous Board schools (not those built by School Boards, but those transferred to School Boards by Voluntary managers), as well as some undenominational ones (called "British" schools because they were in union with the British and Foreign School Society), and some Nonconformist Voluntary schools, which were held in buildings quite as inconvenient and insanitary as those of any school belonging to the Anglican Church. The Department drew no distinction between them. The crusade was entered upon for the sake of the health of the children and teachers, and in order to obtain better education, and not for any political object. I am afraid that the exigencies of creed often lead to cruelty to-day, as surely as they have through all the ages.

## IX

### OTHER REFORMS

UNDER different and more favourable conditions, the Liberal Government might have embarked on legislation to systematise and perfect the grades of education from the elementary school to the university, and might have rendered the Act of 1902, so far as it affected the elementary school, impossible, while at the same time granting to all elementary schools the only great benefit that Act conferred on them—that is to say, a sound financial status. But Mr. Acland's activities, great as they were, were necessarily confined in the main to improvement in administration, though he succeeded in passing an Act to raise the age of compulsory attendance at school. That Act was limited by political possibilities, and did not go very far. He also passed an excellent Act for intermediate education in Wales. He administered the Free Education Act so as to make clear to the parents and the public, that every parent had an absolute and indefeasible right to obtain education for his child without payment of a fee, even though the enforcing of that right might involve the establishment of a School Board.

He took in hand the organisation of the Science

and Art Department, and he adapted, or attempted to adapt, in face of the opposition of the House of Lords, the schemes of the Charity Commissioners to the needs of the people, especially as regarded religious education in Wales, where the majority of the people are, of course, Nonconformist.

By promoting to be full Inspectors several of the sub-Inspectors, he opened the Inspectorate to the certificated teachers, many of whom held degrees, and who were often better qualified for the position than the University man, who, however considerable might have been his knowledge of classics or mathematics, had never seen an elementary school in his life, and had no sympathy with elementary teaching.

He set up within the Office a sub-department for special inquiries and reports, which was placed under Mr. M. E. Sadler (now the head of Leeds University), who was assisted by Mr. R. Morant (afterwards Secretary of the Board of Education). The reports of this sub-department, which were largely concerned with education in foreign countries, were, and are still, of quite inestimable value. Mr. Sadler brought to bear on the questions and inquiries submitted to him, a knowledge of education, both generally and in detail, which was then, and is still, second to that of no man in this, or perhaps in any other, country. When, years afterwards, he found it necessary to resign his position, I could not help feeling that his resignation was a real loss to the State, and that it would be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to find a man who could adequately fill his place. Such cases are exceedingly rare. But that place was not one in which a man could make up for any lack of

knowledge by picking the brains of his subordinates. Mr. Sadler had to depend exclusively on his own knowledge and his own ability, and the excellence of the work that he accomplished stands as a testimony to the greatness of both.



## X

### THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT OF 1895

#### THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

WHEN, in 1895, the Liberal Government went out of office (on cordite), Mr. Acland was succeeded by the Duke of Devonshire and Sir John Gorst. A more unfortunate selection could not have been made, nor a greater contrast imagined. The Duke was dull, silent, and impassive, Sir John Gorst active and mischievous. Puck was for ever dancing round Jupiter, while administering pin-pricks with perfect impartiality to all who came near him, whether they were his superiors or inferiors. For eight years I had to endure conditions of discord, stagnation, and reaction.

The officials generally, with that little touch of snobbery from which no Government Office is altogether free, rather welcomed the advent of such an important person as the Duke. They had visions of entertainments. They liked to feel that they had a man of such high hereditary rank at the head of affairs. The higher staff were mostly Tories, having been appointed by Tory Governments, and they looked forward with pleasurable anticipation (and not without reason) to a period of ease and quiescence, such as the reputation of the Duke and their .

former experiences of Tory administration had led them to expect. So far as the Duke was concerned, they were not disappointed, for he never initiated any change, and was quite content to accept the present position and to avoid the more laborious work of providing for the future. He had filled many rôles, but (happily) he had never before had assigned to him that of Minister of Education, and from the day he assumed that position to the day he vacated it, he was profoundly ignorant of the system the Department had to administer, of its routine, and of its duties. The information that he required to decide the comparatively few questions submitted to him he probably obtained from his very able private secretary. This much, however, can be said for him, he never made any pretence to knowledge that he did not possess, and he was never afraid of admitting that he was no expert in educational matters, which was, of course, perfectly true. I remember that on one occasion Lord Sheffield, when introducing a deputation to the Duke, talked about ex-P.T.'s. "What is an ex-P.T.?" said the Duke. The deputation, consisting of teachers and others to whom this abbreviation of "ex-pupil teacher" was a household word, were somewhat surprised. The Duke may perhaps be forgiven for the offence of unfamiliarity with official abbreviations, but what can be said of the following?

When he had been about six years Minister of Education, I happened to be one day in his room, and he asked me to tell him something about training colleges. Accordingly I gave him a kind of lecture for about half an hour. I told him everything I could think of in connection with training colleges,

their object, their curriculum, to whom they belonged, on what conditions State grants were paid to them, the regulations of the Department for the examination of their students, etc., etc., and I felt satisfied at the end of my effort that I had told him pretty well everything there was to tell on the subject. During the lecture the Duke did not make a single comment nor ask a question, but sat perfectly silent and stared into vacancy. But at the end, when I told him I had nothing more to say, and was congratulating myself on having given him such a lucid exposition, and on having made him understand it, he suddenly turned to me and uttered these memorable words, "What is a certificated teacher?" I had been teaching reading to a pupil who did not know his alphabet.

I am afraid he was unredeemed by any sense of humour. At any rate, he never exhibited it to me except once, and it is questionable whether even on that occasion he intended to be facetious or not. It was in one of the early years of his tenure of office, at a time when Sir John Gorst had made himself specially obnoxious to the Government by some cynical speech, and I, on the other hand, happened to be in the Government's and the Duke's good books. He was discussing Sir J. Gorst's proceedings, and wondering whether any inducement worthy of his acceptance could be offered him to transfer his energies elsewhere. I suggested that a colonial governorship would be tempting, "not one of the two thousand pounds places, but a four thousand pounds one, such as Trinidad or Jamaica." Said the Duke, slowly and deliberately, not moving a muscle of his face, "I cannot imagine that the

Government would offer Sir John Gorst the governorship of any colony that they desired to *retain* ! ”

About the only time I ever heard him laugh, was when he recounted a story of some peer who had gone down with him to Kempton Park races, and taken with him three hats, as he was new to racing, did not know the proper kind of headgear to wear on a racecourse, and wanted the Duke's advice on the subject before committing himself.

Occasionally, when he required expert comment on some document he used to ask me to get it from Mr. Sadler, and I was instructed always to say that he wanted just a few notes on a half-sheet of notepaper. It was, of course, often absolutely impossible to give what he required in that very limited space, and what I actually obtained was perhaps two or three closely written pages of foolscap. When the Duke saw them he used to heave a sigh and say, “What is all this about ? ” I would reply, “This is the information you wished to get on a half-sheet of notepaper, but I have marked all the most important passages, so as to save you trouble in getting at what you want, and, if you look at the end, you will see the suggestions that I have made.” The Duke, however, never was capable of “picking out the plums ” from a document, and he always read steadily from the beginning until he was tired or completely fogged. Then he used to knock off, and annex the document, as he said, for further consideration. I never knew what became of it afterwards unless some decision was urgently required. But how he arrived at it I know not. He usually managed it, I think, by endorsing whatever recommendations I had made. Writing “I agree ” gives little trouble.

As a rule, he was impassive, but on the few occasions when he did wake up and interest himself in anything, there was a wonderful alteration in him. His face lighted up, and his eyes became phenomenally bright. He reminded me of some youth who had suddenly appreciated the reason and the meaning, as well as the fact, of some abstruse rule in mathematics, the binomial theorem for instance.

He had the reputation of being kind and sympathetic. That may be, and probably was, the case, but I never happened to experience that side of his character, while I know that on one occasion, at any rate, he did a very unnecessary, heartless, and cruel thing.

In all the eight years I served under him, I never got on anything like familiar terms with him. He gave me the impression of being so wrapped up in his own dignity and family pride, that he regarded commoners such as myself as people to be kept at a distance.

He was a living wet blanket, and he seemed to consider that his principal duty was to pour cold water upon every proposition that was made to him, and to show a chronic lack of appreciation of the merits of any reform suggested to him. For instance, at some period during the later years of my term of office, I had been making inquiries respecting the system of education in Germany. I remember that I thought the general system too mechanical, and too much on a dead level, permitting little scope for individualism, and I came to the conclusion that this country had little to learn from it of any value; but I was much impressed by the institutions which the German Government had set up for technological

teaching and various kinds of research, such as those at Crefeld and Hesse Darmstadt and other places, and by the enormous amount of assistance those institutions gave to German industries, enabling them to undersell our manufacturers and to oust British goods from the British and foreign markets. I realised the advantage of the new knowledge which was constantly being produced by such institutions, and I found on inquiry that the additions to it—*i.e.* new processes or new machinery—were, in the case of some industries, so continuous that they were not even patented. It was not worth while to patent them, for improvement followed improvement so rapidly that before one was worked out another was ready to supersede it. They were usually mere secret processes.

I formulated a rough scheme for organising technological teaching and research, and took it to the Duke. The scheme was to create a great central technological institution in London, and to affiliate to it, in connection with the provincial universities, other institutions which might probably adapt themselves usefully to the industries of particular localities. I explained the scheme in general terms, for of course it would have been premature to have worked out the details, to the Duke. I told him that it was a big proposition, and would cost a good deal of money, that if it was to be of real benefit to our industries, it ought to be carried out at least on the German scale, and that if it was starved financially either as regarded buildings, staff, or equipment it would be useless. The Duke said casually that he thought it "rather a good idea," but that if much money was wanted, there would be a difficulty. I asked him

how much he thought he could get the Government to give, and he said, "Certainly not more than about £20,000 or £30,000." I replied that such a sum would not even suffice for efficient equipment and apparatus, and that, although I had had no estimate made, the whole capital expenditure would run to some hundreds of thousands of pounds, perhaps even to a million and a half if the thing was to be done well, and that the Government would also have to provide a large annual sum for upkeep. The Duke said that such an expenditure *for such a purpose* was out of the question, that he could not possibly ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for anything approaching it. Of course, I could do no more. But I venture to think that the great war has taught us a lesson upon the value of technological research, and that, if my proposal had been seriously considered and something of the kind adopted, we should have been better off to-day in many ways. I do not venture to say that what I suggested was the only or the best plan, but I think it was worth greater attention than was bestowed upon it, and that, before being rejected with contumely, it might at least have been submitted to a committee of industrial and scientific experts.

The Duke came to the office at Whitehall comparatively rarely; in such intervals, no doubt, as he could spare from social engagements and the pleasing diversions of racing and bridge. Occasionally he would send a message in the morning, saying that he was going to look in on his way to the House of Lords. Soon after there would arrive another message to the effect that he was coming on his way back from the House of Lords; then again

another saying that he was not coming at all. The attractions elsewhere were doubtless too great to be sacrificed. As to his attendance at the Science and Art Department at South Kensington (of which also he was the Parliamentary head) it was limited, I believe, to one or two visits during his eight years of office.

As he so seldom did any work, and as he so rarely gave himself the trouble of serious discussion, his influence certainly was the reverse of stimulating. He went to sleep, and the Office seemed to try to follow his example.

No doubt, however, he came to the Education Office at a time of his life when his energies were becoming exhausted. His hands shook and his comprehension was slow, and he gave me the idea that he was a man who had lived too luxurious a life, and was beginning to pay the inevitable penalty.

Yet I may be wronging him. For I see that the medical profession has recently "elucidated" (I believe that is the proper term) idleness as a new disease, with its attendant microbe, and has named it "encephalitis lethargica." Possibly, therefore, the chronic apathy from which the Duke suffered and the failure of his mental energies were due to a cause for which he was not responsible !



## XI

### SIR JOHN GORST

SIR JOHN GORST was the very antithesis of his chief, the Duke of Devonshire. There was nothing dull about *him*. He was extremely clever and at times brilliant, but his success in politics and administration was marred by his erratic temperament. He was a kind of Conservative and Clerical socialist, and he declined to talk to the order of the Cabinet, or to sink his personal views in those of his party. In those days that was called disloyalty and barred promotion, but when I was in Parliament what is called "crossing the floor of the House" was the surest road to place and power. Sir John more than once read to me the notes of a speech, saying as he came to a particularly objectionable or cynical passage, "This will tickle them up," "them" being his own Government! Or, "Balfour won't like this bit; he'll squirm!" He had a keen sense of humour, and delighted in administering pin-pricks to the Cabinet, for whom he entertained, I think, a whole-hearted and probably justifiable contempt. I believe his speeches to have been perfectly honest, but he paid dearly for his honesty. He was kept out of the Cabinet, as no doubt it was thought, and rightly, that he would be a disturbing

element ; but he was far abler than most Cabinet Ministers.

His queer aberrations made him unpopular in the Office. His excellent private secretary, one of the most delightful of men, gladly left him to fight in the Transvaal, and received two wounds in consequence (I believe he has since been killed in this war), and no Examiner was at all anxious to fill the vacancy ; though it was a position which was usually much coveted, as it carried an additional salary of £150 per annum, and sometimes led to promotion. When he found that he was boycotted, Sir John came to me in some trouble and suggested, as a way out of the difficulty, that Mr. Morant, who was assistant to Mr. Sadler in the sub-Department of "Special Inquiries and Reports," might be appointed. Sir John asked if I had any objection, as (except in the case of Mr. Cumin) no such arrangement had ever been made before, the private secretaryship to the Vice-President having been always considered one of the indefeasible rights and perquisites of the Examiners ; and, moreover, the higher staff of the sub-Department to which Mr. Morant belonged consisted of himself and Mr. Sadler only, and the absence of one of them would necessarily be exceedingly inconvenient, and limit the output of valuable special reports. I felt, however, that it was essential that the Vice-President should not be driven to appoint some one from outside the Office, who would know nothing of its work, and therefore be of little assistance to him and a nuisance to myself, and I finally consented.

He never understood departmental amenities. If he knew that I objected to something he desired, he

•

would go to the Duke behind my back and get his imprimatur, and the first intimation I had of his proceedings would be that some change had been approved for which there was no good reason, and which it was impossible, or exceedingly difficult, to administer.

As regards the relations between him and myself and the Duke there were two distinct periods, the first at the commencement, and the second at the end, of his term of office. In the early days he was distrusted and disliked both by the Duke and the Cabinet, while I was more or less in favour; in later years he had completely captured his chief, who was mere putty in his plastic hand; and I, though I did not know it until too late, was being intrigued against and vilified, with the effect that might have been expected on the senile mentality of the Duke. For some reason or other Sir John took umbrage at the failure of the Education Bill of 1896. He attributed to me, rightly or wrongly (I forget which it was now, but it matters little), the framing of the groundwork of the Bill, to which he objected and which, in his opinion, eventually led to its withdrawal. His animus against me was accentuated by the Voluntary Schools Act of 1897. He desired to allow by that Act Voluntary School Associations for counties only, and not for dioceses. His view was not accepted by the Cabinet, but was so pronounced that Mr. Balfour, in order to avoid difficulties, gave me instructions, after the Act had passed, that he was to be consulted personally, in the event of any points of importance arising. Happily, however, Sir J. Gorst sulked and absented himself from the Office, and consequently the administration of the

Act proceeded smoothly. The Board of Education Act was also framed without his aid, and that fact caused additional friction.

In the twelve or fourteen months ending August 1899 he rarely attended at the Education Department. That was a period of quiet and effective administration. But the moment he again asserted himself, friction began once more. He set out to capture the Duke, an enterprise which presented no great difficulty. And when he had succeeded, he most cleverly used his guileless captive as a means to secure his ends, the fomentation of discord and the promotion of fads. A reprint will be found in the Appendix of an article which appeared in *Truth* of August 15, 1901, which correctly represents the state of things existing in the Education Office while Sir J. Gorst was Vice-President. I may perhaps add, in view of what I have said above, that I neither wrote nor inspired, directly or indirectly, the article.

Sir John had remarkable habits. He used to ride to the Department on a bicycle of brilliant red, and he was probably often mistaken for a Post Office official. He said that cycling was the finest exercise possible, and suggested that I should follow his example but that I had better use a "lady's bicycle," as it would be safer if I tumbled off. I was grateful, but could have wished that his kindly care for my bones had been extended to our official relations. He was by way of being fond of Art, and indeed was something of an artist, and he is reported to have attended classes at South Kensington during his term of office. What the other students thought of his presence there is not recorded. In his room at the House of Commons it was his custom to employ

•

his spare time, of which he had plenty, in copying pictures. The room was on the ground floor, looking on the Terrace, and inspection of his work through the window appeared to delight the younger and more frivolous Members, especially when it consisted, as it often did, in copying from the nude. Deputations and visitors seemed to be equally susceptible.

Though for long periods, when something or other had offended him, he did not put in an appearance at the Whitehall Office, he was constantly at South Kensington, where he was always hand in glove with the officials. In fact he took some pains to pose as if he was intentionally excluded from the control of the Education Department, and was not allowed to have anything to do with its administration, so that he was forced into the arms of the Science and Art Department. On one occasion during one of those periods he was asked by the Duke to attend a deputation in the Lord President's room at Whitehall. The Duke and I happened to arrive at the same moment, and we found Sir John with mock humility caressing his hat in the ante-room, as if he had no business there and did not dare to enter the room before he had leave from the proprietor. He always used to declare that he was very shy!

Had it not been for that curious twist of mind and temper, which sooner or later brought him into collision with every one and destroyed his public usefulness, he might have done much for education and the schools. His views were advanced, and he was deeply sympathetic with the children, especially with those who for no fault of their own were educated in the workhouse and commonly designated "pauper" children. These he very properly wished to make

“State” children, without the pauper brand or the pauper’s uniform upon them. Speaking generally, he and I fully agreed in social politics, but his proper place, save for his clericalism, was on the Liberal and not on the Conservative benches. For my part I have never been able to understand how any one who has been long in touch with education, the children, the parents, and the teachers can be or remain a Conservative or reactionary.

He was a curious compound of clerical and socialist, and I have always understood that he was mainly responsible for the inclusion of elementary education in the Act of 1902-3 and for its objectionable provisions respecting Church schools. Originally the Bill, which was founded on one introduced the year before, dealt with secondary education only. But I know personally nothing of the motives of the Government for the course they adopted, which, some three years afterwards, was one of the chief causes of their downfall and of the great majority returned against them.

Sir John ended his political life as a declared Liberal. After he had found salvation, he and I were both present and spoke at a trade union meeting at the Memorial Hall. Both of us made strong, socialistic speeches. As Sir John and I were leaving the hall together, he turned to me and said, “I wonder which people think the greater sinner, you or me.”

The impression left on me by his eight years of service in the Education Department and Board of Education is that, if he had been less obtrusively disloyal to his Government and so had obtained a measure of their confidence, and if he had shown a

little more tact and consideration in dealing with his subordinates, and had trusted them, his active mind might have been a valuable counterpoise to the lethargic intelligence of the Duke, as his views on education were in so many respects sound and progressive. But his methods caused him to be distrusted both by Ministers and officials and rendered him impossible as a co-worker, the result being that the Duke's passivity, and not Sir John's activity, was the measure of the policy of the Education Office.

## XII

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN 1899 the Education Department and the Science and Art Department were combined as the Board of Education, by the Board of Education Act. I was formally appointed Secretary, but the change made no difference to me, as I was already head of both Departments. The only alteration in my status that I am aware of was that, having technically been promoted from the third to the second class of permanent officials (whatever that may mean), I was entitled to wear a good deal more gold on my Court uniform, an expensive privilege of which I never availed myself.

There was a strong difference of opinion, and much discussion, as to the nomenclature and constitution of the new Office. Such trivialities were regarded in those small days as of the gravest importance. The contentious question was whether it should be a Board on the model of the Board of Trade and Local Government Board, or whether it should be a Secretary's Office, similar to that of the Secretary for Scotland. I think no one dared to suggest that the Parliamentary head should be a Secretary of State, though, for the life of me, I cannot see why the President of the Board should not have ranked as



high as any Minister, seeing that education lies at the very root of the discipline, morality, physical and mental culture, and material prosperity of the people. I was among those who opposed the "Board" plan. We pointed out the absurdity of creating a Board which, like the Local Government and other Boards, would be composed of a number of Ministers who knew nothing about their business and which, again like the other Boards, would never meet, and would therefore be a mere farce. But finally, under pressure from the Treasury, it was decided to have a Board, the power of which was of course wholly vested in the President. The reason which prevailed was as absurd as the Board itself. Tradition and precedent (the idols of red-tapists) prescribed that a Board was the cheaper kind of organisation, as the salary of the President of a Board was, according to convention, only £2000 per annum, while that of a Secretary had to be fixed independently of tradition. A further reason was that the Parliamentary Secretary and the Permanent Secretary of a Board were also cheaper, like their chief! But there was no real reason whatever, except Treasury red-tape, why, if a Secretary for Education had been appointed, his salary and that of his subordinates should not have been fixed on the same scale as if he had been President of a Board. I may say here that possibly it may be supposed that my views in the controversy were inspired by personal considerations, but as a matter of fact the new scale did not affect me at all, as I was already paid at the higher rate. Nor did it affect Sir John Gorst, as he was not a Parliamentary Secretary but Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, and so received the salary

attached to that office. In fact at that time the President, the *de facto* Parliamentary Secretary, and the Permanent Secretary were all entitled to precisely the same emolument. One curious and ridiculous result of the Act was that Sir John Gorst remained for some years as Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, which had no President and no members, and which in fact no longer existed, the Board of Education Act having happily extinguished it. Yet, after all, the Board of Education was not quite so absurd a body as the Board of Trade, which, if my memory serves me rightly, included, and probably still includes, the Archbishop of Canterbury, of all people in the world, among its members.

But Treasury red-tape carried the day and added another Board, which never met and exercised no authority, to the existing list of such absurdities.

### XIII

#### EDUCATION UNDER THE TORY GOVERNMENT

It is not at all my purpose to present this book in the guise of a History of Education during my Secretaryship. That has been undertaken by others and I have nothing to add to it, so far as the details of Acts and Codes are concerned. I pass these over, merely recording various matters and incidents which have occurred to me as being interesting to the public.

When the Tory Government came into power I was conscious from the first that the Parliamentary heads of the Department distrusted me. The duty of a Civil Servant is to carry out the policy of the party in power, without political bias of any kind, and the general fulfilment of that duty is the condition of the permanence of heads of Departments. Were it otherwise it would be necessary that they should be changed with every administration, as in the United States of America. That duty I always fulfilled to the uttermost.

But I think that both the Duke and Sir J. Gorst, and probably other Ministers, could not forget that I had been the author of the scheme for Free Education, the consequences of which they were beginning to experience, and that I had been closely associated,

## EDUCATION UNDER TORY GOVERNMENT 111

with Mr. Acland's effort to bring the Voluntary schools into line with the Board schools as regarded sanitation and convenience for teaching purposes, and thus, in their view, had been an accomplice in a raid upon clerical pockets. Nor were these facts ever forgotten by the dignitaries of the Church, the Church generally, or the Tory peers, squires, and landlords. However much they may protest the contrary, it is impossible to believe that these classes can ever feel any honest sympathy with the progress of education, which makes for liberty and equality and undermines their authority. It is not, and never has been, the interest of the Church, or of its allies, the landed proprietors, to make the people *think*.

During the eight years that I served under the Tory Government I was therefore in an extremely difficult position. I had to be, and I was, loyal to the Government and its reactionary policy ; it was my duty to carry out the latter as they intended it should be administered, and at the same time to do my best to hold the fort for education, the teachers, and the children. In the result I think that, while sops were thrown to the ill-supported, sometimes bankrupt, and often inefficient Voluntary schools, the general administration of the Education Department was on the whole distinctly progressive. It was no easy matter for any Government to stop the ball which had been set rolling. In the end the demand of the so-called " Voluntary " schools for further financial assistance became so strong that a compromise was effected between Education and the Church by the Act of 1902, which, while distinguishing in certain points of management the Voluntary from the Board schools, gave all equal financial aid,

•

## 112 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

yet maintained the denominational character of the former, and assured certain rights to the clergy. I do not propose here to criticise that Act, which contained many good, as well as many bad, provisions. It is enough to say that certainly the education of the children generally has profited by it, and that doubtless its defects will be made good when the time arrives for considering them, after questions arising from the war have been disposed of. I have dealt with its main defect and the remedy in a subsequent chapter.

## SECTION III

“Farrago libelli.”

IN this Section will be found records of experience incidental to official life, and short monographs on various subjects connected with education.



# I

## THE SECRETARY'S POSITION AND WORK

THE Secretary of every State Department, when the headship is not, so to speak, in commission (as it is in such offices as the Admiralty and War Office), is not only responsible for all rules and regulations affecting the procedure of his subordinates, but is the authority which decides all official questions which are sufficiently novel not to be governed by precedent. The only exceptions are the comparatively few matters which, as involving questions of policy, patronage, or special importance—not merely of ordinary administration—he, in his absolute discretion, sees fit to refer to the Parliamentary heads of the Department, considering that they should assume the responsibility for any results that may ensue from the decision arrived at.

The Secretary's work is therefore of a very varied character. In my case by far the greater part of the day was spent in giving interviews to visitors, attendance on Ministers, supplying evasive replies to unpleasant questions in Parliament, and so forth; and the real work, that of deciding important points of administration and discipline, considering Government Bills, framing minutes and necessary circulars, and a hundred other matters, had consequently to



## 116 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

be done either after office hours or after reaching home, or in the early morning before leaving it. As I lived some distance out of London, I also got through a good deal in the train, as there were often many papers to be read. There were very few evenings when it was not necessary for a messenger to take bundles of papers to the railway station for home consumption. Even during so-called holidays these bundles pursued me. My predecessor, Patrick Cumin, declared that he found that the only way of getting away from them was to ship himself on board one of the Peninsular & Oriental Mediterranean coasting steamers. Then nobody knew where to find him, and the officials did not dare to send him any of these precious papers, not out of consideration for him or his holiday, but for fear that they might never get to him or back again. I was not so lucky. I always went to the same quarters salmon fishing, and everybody knew where to find *me*. The consequence was that I never got a real holiday, and the advent of the postman was a daily trial, though I used to circumvent him when possible by going out very early in the morning before he appeared. On several occasions he arrived with a sack on his back, which was filled with large letters and files of papers! On the other hand, probably there was a good deal more health and strength to be got out of a holiday of that kind, spent in a farmhouse and living a simple life, than by lolling on the deck of a luxurious liner.

The Secretary was expected not only to know everything, to the minutest detail, of educational and official organisation and administration, and to be ready, at a moment's notice, to decide all questions submitted to him, but also to be absolutely infallible.

## SECRETARY'S POSITION AND WORK .117

Mr. Cumin once said to me that it was one of his golden rules, if he was wrong, never to admit it, because that would tend to diminish his authority. That may have been so, but I doubt it. I have personally found it a better plan to retreat as quickly as possible from an untenable position. The duty of carrying out the numerous Acts of Parliament which the Department had to administer, the interpretation of the Code of regulations, the supply of schools, the setting up of School Boards, the enforcement of discipline, the organisation of the staff, were all within my purview; but these comprised only a part, and probably the lesser part, of the questions submitted for decision day by day. In the later years of my official life, the union of the Science and Art Department with the Education Department provided even greater variety.

Deputations from School Boards and other bodies took up much of my time, but they were extremely useful. I seldom found that they had not good reason for their requests, or that they had not some real grievance, of which, or of the extent of which, the Department was not aware. I never refused to see them, and if there was a grievance, I always tried to remedy it, and let no red tape stand in the way. It often happened that these friendly conversations led to salutary changes in administration, or even in the law.

The hardest time was when any important Bill of the Department was before Parliament, especially when it was in the Committee or Report stage, and was being considered line by line. Only then did office work really get into arrear, for the usual interviews and the conferences day by day with the

Minister in charge of the Bill on amendments which were on the paper, and which were likely to be reached the same night, and the necessity of being at the House by four o'clock and often remaining until it rose, took up nearly the whole working day, and for that matter much of the night also. The tension involved in listening intently, hour after hour, to speeches, especially to those from the Opposition benches, was very great, and a severe tax upon nerves and endurance. The gallery under which Civil Service officials then sat was on the left hand side of the clock, at the end of the House remote from the two front benches, and was even more distant from the back benches opposite Ministers, which provided the great majority of speeches; and however industriously one might listen, it was often difficult to hear distinctly. However dull or soporific, or silly or ignorant the speeches were, even temporary inattention was impossible, as at any moment the Minister in charge (or some member deputed by him) might ask for information as to the proper answer to some criticism; while I, on the other hand, if I noticed anything in the Opposition speeches to which a reply was needed, had to send a message to the Minister. It was a considerable strain, especially as the criticisms which were the most difficult to answer came mainly from the Opposition benches, which, as I have mentioned, were farthest away from the seats under the gallery occupied by officials. The only respite was the dinner hour, for which in those days the House adjourned. Then the unfortunate official, unless some kindly member offered him hospitality, might betake himself to the nearest restaurant, or the refreshment bar in the lobby, .

## SECRETARY'S POSITION AND WORK 119

and snatch a hasty meal to recuperate his exhausted powers.

I was obliged, also, to attend the House of Lords under similar circumstances. That was less onerous, for it was usually only to listen to the Lord President making a speech, as the Lords were less critical on small points than the Commons, at any rate in educational matters. I thought it, however, an exceedingly dull business, and uncomfortable to boot. The discomfort was such that it completely precluded sleep, even during the speeches of the Duke of Devonshire, which, as the story goes, had a soporific effect even upon himself. The only seating accommodation provided was at the side of the Bishops' benches, and was a narrow bench placed with its back to the floor of the House, so that if one desired, or was unhappily compelled, to listen, it was necessary to stand all the time. The single redeeming feature was that, except on very rare occasions, the House almost invariably rose in time to enable the Lords to go home to dinner—a function which has always been very dear to them. Occasionally I slipped inside the rails surrounding the throne and sat on the steps, a place sacred to Privy Councillors and peers' eldest sons; but usually the watchful attendants were on their guard against a raid of that kind.

One way and another, in the House itself and in the Vice-President's room, I used to see a good deal of Parliament, not, however, for the first time or the last. When I was quite a boy my father or grandfather, who were both members, used to put me under the gallery to hear the speeches of Gladstone and Disraeli and other orators of that date, and I well remember hearing the former move his resolu-

•

## 120 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

tions for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and also the reply of Disraeli. And after I left the Board of Education, I myself sat in the House for four years. I should imagine that few living men, if any, have had similar experiences.

## II

### PRIVATE SECRETARIES

PRIVATE secretaries are at once the curse and the blessing of the Civil Service. They have ample opportunity to be either. They are, however, indispensable, no Minister or permanent head of a Department could get on without one. I had myself for personal service two private secretaries (one of them unpaid), as well as a shorthand writer and typist, who were all kept fully employed. The private secretary is, or ought to be, a kind of conduit pipe between his chief and everybody else in the Office or outside it. He obtains information for his chief when required, and gives it to callers and correspondents within the limits of discretion; he fetches and carries, keeps his chief's work in order, and carries out confidential instructions. In fact, there is no limit to the variety of his duties, and so long as he confines himself to his proper functions, and discharges them well, he is an unmixed blessing. But when a man is in the complete confidence of his chief (especially if that chief is a Minister), and is clever enough to know exactly how to handle him, and to ingratiate himself with him, the temptation to intrigue is very strong, and the danger that the Minister will fall into the trap is great. Somebody

once said that any civil servant is fit for any place in any Government office in which Providence pleases to place him ; and, as a matter of fact, there are few positions in Government offices which require Solons or Solomons as their occupants. A private secretary may not be endowed with any great ability, but he knows very well that if he can get jobbed into a good place with a good salary, he can fill it well enough never to be removed. Any man who is not more stupid than the average has a fee simple. Of course, if a private secretary of a Minister is unscrupulous, the principal and usual method of intrigue is for him to depreciate to his chief the ability or honesty of the man he wants to get rid of, so that he may be promoted to the vacancy. Such an unscrupulous private secretary depends also largely on flattery and lip service to gain his ends. Most Ministers have a very excellent opinion of themselves, though they may really (and probably) be mere windbag politicians ; and the private secretary, if he is an intriguer, while he cleverly paddles his canoe with the flowing tide and makes himself more and more indispensable, must worship and flatter his Minister, as if the latter were a little god. He must take especial care not to outrage the Minister's self-satisfaction. For example : the Minister has been perhaps occupied in thinking, and has, as he fondly imagines, made a new discovery of something which, as a matter of fact, has been common knowledge in his Office for years. He jubilantly and proudly tells his private secretary. The private secretary does not lie and applaud the discovery as new. Not he ; he knows better—for two reasons ; the first, that it is to his profit to pose as knowing everything, the

second, that his chief may possibly find out the truth from somebody else. He says, "Yes, I think I have heard something of that kind before, but I never heard it put quite so neatly and concisely as you put it, or from exactly the same point of view."

The private secretary to the permanent head has hardly the same opportunity for intrigue as the Minister's secretary, and as he has not highly confidential duties to the same extent, and as the permanent head is pretty well acquainted with both the merits and demerits of his higher staff, and does not depend on his secretary for information as regards them, and as, moreover, his secretary does not move in such lofty and influential Ministerial circles, he is not so likely to be corrupted. My own private secretaries were above reproach. They were uniformly excellent and incorruptible, though, of course, they varied somewhat in ability and usefulness. But it must be understood that I had the fullest previous knowledge of them, and that I selected them not merely on the ground of capacity, but also on that of character. And they all, without exception, justified my selection, though in different degree.

But the Minister chooses his man for other reasons. He probably knows nothing about him personally, but the man has been "recommended" by some friend or relation of the Minister. An incoming Minister usually consults the permanent head: "So-and-so has been recommended to me by Lord Boodle; he says he is a very clever fellow. What do you think?" The permanent head knows that the man is quite capable of filling the place and says so, and though he may not consider him an ideal candidate either as regards ability or character, yet does not

•



care to stand in his way, especially as it might be difficult to give any solid reason for doing so. So the man is appointed. He is of course a junior, and knows little of the more important parts of the work of the Office. But he knows a great deal more than his chief; and if he plays his part well and picks up what he does not know, the Minister soon comes to rely upon him, and to mark him for promotion when opportunity offers.

One of the scandals of the Civil Service in my time was the constant promotion of youthful private secretaries over the heads of able men who had worked their way up and borne the burden and heat of the day. I should say that at one time three parts of the principal places in the Civil Service were filled by men who at one time or another had been private secretaries to Ministers. In a service in which there are a large number of really able men, such a proportion is ridiculously unfair. I know no parallel to it elsewhere, except perhaps the extent to which sons of ex-Cabinet Ministers used, when I was in Parliament, to find places in the Government. It was simply marvellous how ability (or perhaps, rather, fat places) ran in families. I commend this fact to the supporters of the doctrine of heredity.

The worst case perhaps was the constant promotion of Treasury clerks who were, or had been, private secretaries. The number of private secretaryships as well as that of valuable appointments in the gift of the Treasury is very large, for the number of Ministers in that Office is exceptional, and there are several Offices under, or affiliated to it, for which the First Lord or the Chancellor of the Exchequer select the high officials. In most of these Offices,

the fact that a man was serving in and had worked his way up through his own Office appeared to be a positive bar to his selection as its head, however capable he might be.

The Exchequer and Audit Office, for instance, was a notable example. No one had any chance of promotion to the highest places in it except a Treasury clerk, or possibly some other favoured outsider. No man employed in the Office appeared to be ever even considered for promotion, nor were distinguished men in other Offices. I remember once saying to a Secretary of the Treasury, "Why do you invariably appoint your clerks, to the exclusion of everybody else, to the headships of Departments that are in your gift? I have a number of exceptionally able men in my Office, who would fill any position with distinction. Why not consider one or two of them." He replied: "I will tell you what Sir William Harcourt gave as a reason when a similar suggestion was made to him. He said, 'No doubt there may be plenty of able men in other Offices, but *we don't know them.*'" That certainly was true enough, but it is not fair, on the face of it, either that a capable man who has worked his way up through all the grades of his own Department should be superseded from outside, or that any civil servant should be handicapped, because he happens not to be in a gilt-edged Office. The system involves not merely injustice to the individual, but loss to the State. The Civil Service ought to be considered as a whole.

In my opinion private secretaries should be shifted more often. It is not good for a man, especially if he is private secretary to a *Minister*, to occupy such a position too long; he gets too much power,

•

## 126 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

and it is not in the public interest that the permanent head of a Department, if he wants to have a peaceful life, or even to continue in office, should have to curry favour with one of his own staff. But private secretaries are constantly the dark forces behind the throne, and have to be reckoned with as such.

### III

#### MINISTERS

IN my childhood and youth I was taught to revere a Minister of the Crown as a sort of demigod. I wondered that their small heads could carry all they knew, and that they had the brains and the energy to do the enormous amount of work that I imagined fell to their lot. Since then I have been behind the scenes. "*Deos didici securum agere aevum*"—at any rate in times of peace. If a Minister paid a visit to the house of either my father or grandfather, who were both country squires and in Parliament, it was an honour never to be forgotten, and the room he slept in became almost consecrated. From experience gained both in the Civil Service and in Parliament, I should judge that at that time the reverence of ordinary Members of Parliament for persons in the Government (though perhaps not the toadying of them) was far greater than in this democratic age. At any rate that experience has shattered my respect for the elect.

Before becoming Secretary of the Education Department I had never had any personal knowledge of a Minister, and at that time I was still obsessed (more or less) by my youthful illusions as to their singular superiority over other men. Gradually,

however, these illusions were dispelled by constant intercourse (we all know the old proverb about familiarity) and before very long had disappeared altogether. Nor were they renewed by my Parliamentary experience.

I came to realise the absurdity of the method by which places in the Government were distributed. The men who had already served in Cabinets got the best, whether they were fit to fill them or not, and, as regards the others, the main object was to apportion them so as to avoid offending any important personage or any section of the Party in power. Merit had always to give place to political expediency. The House of Lords, the moderate men, the extremists at each end of the political party creed, all had to have their share of the plums. They were jabbed into different offices, according to their dignities, apparently without a thought whether they fitted or did not fit their positions. As a rule, a new Minister appointed under the system was generally pushed up the ladder of office a stage higher before he had learnt enough to be of much practical use in his original Department. The Board of Education suffered more than any other office, because—heaven only knows why—its head, if in the Cabinet, was generally regarded as the lowest and least important Cabinet Minister, and if not in the Cabinet, was considered to be next in the running for a place in the Cabinet, and the greater his ability and usefulness in the position he occupied the more likely he was to get a rise in importance—and salary—when the first vacancy occurred among those above him. As for the Cabinet so constituted, it was always too large, and it was inevitably a Cabinet of compromise, in

which the tail, as in the case of Lord Dundreary's dog, wagged the head : of that we have had a very recent instance.

The system had held its ground from time immemorial, in peace and war, tolerable like everything else in peace, but intolerable in war. It died hard, for the long-suffering British public endured it for more than two years of war. Then at last Mr. Lloyd George worked something of a revolution and none too soon. He had the courage to modify though he did not altogether abandon the old vicious system of appointment on purely Party and Parliamentary considerations, and to some extent, at any rate, to appoint skilled workmen to do skilled workmen's jobs. His foremen over the gangs of skilled workmen in Government Offices are now—in some Offices—skilled workmen themselves. There are signs, however, that the old system was only scotched, not killed, and that the pitchforking of Parliamentary windbags into the most important positions is beginning again.

But while it was undoubtedly a step in advance to throw over many of the Parliamentary and Party claimants to office with the meritorious object of obtaining greater energy and efficiency, it by no means followed that it was necessary to place in their stead men who had no knowledge of Government administration or organisation, and no tradition of economy of public expenditure. It is no wonder that these glorified Jacks-in-office, suddenly entrusted with almost unlimited millions, used their powers to the utmost and encouraged their subordinates in every kind of reckless extravagance, in the full knowledge that they had nothing to fear from a tame Parliament.

It is no wonder again that having established a profligate bureaucracy they will not, and perhaps cannot, put an end to, or even modify, its evil practices, now that economy has taken the place of munitions as the first necessity. The result is that the continuance of enterprises, perhaps legitimate, —certainly pardonable in the stress of war—has become a gross scandal in time of peace. The cleaning up is urgent, but it will never be effected by the dilatory, dilly-dally methods of Committees and Royal Commissions, which are usually mere red herrings across the trail. What is needed is strong hands at the head of Departments, versed in administration and keen economists of the public purse.

It is good, however, I hope, for education, for our children and our teachers, that one of Mr. Lloyd George's appointments that violates the old rules is that of Minister of Education. No man, so far as I am aware, has ever before been selected for that position because he knew anything of his business. The best that could be hoped for was that before he went out of office or was propelled upwards he would learn something of it. If, however, he was endowed with common sense and good judgment, and if he applied himself to his lessons with vigour, had good and honest teachers, retained his individualism, and stayed long enough, he might hope to reap a little harvest from the seed that had been sown in him. All Ministers are more or less birds of passage, but the Minister of Education ought, owing to the technical knowledge he should acquire, and the great variety of the duties he should assume, to be less migratory than the rest. Instead of which he has been usually more so.

There is some hope for the man who confesses his ignorance and who puts himself frankly into the hands of the permanent officials for guidance, provided that the officials are straight and reliable, and clean of red tape. But there are two types of Minister which are hopeless. I have known both personally. One is the dangerous innovator, the conceited, self-opinionated prig, who has come to his office with a conviction that everything is wrong and that he has been ordained to set it right and to make a new heaven and a new earth ; and the other is the apathetic, lazy, incapable man, who is wholly devoid of initiative, and whose soul-deadening influence soon affects the whole establishment over which he is supposed to preside. King Stork and King Log are equal abominations in Government Offices.

Before the war, when politics and parties reigned supreme, the people of this country cared little or nothing how a man administered the affairs of the State. If he made smart speeches and supported his party in Parliament on the parochial questions which were all that mattered, he was acceptable to the Government as well as to the majority of his constituents who returned him to Parliament, provided of course that his purse was long enough to satisfy their greed and that he opened its strings freely. "Party" and the caucus were mainly responsible for the inefficiency of Governments. They were even responsible for the blundering follies committed at the commencement of the war, and for those of the first Coalition Government, which was never a national one, but a party one pure and simple, the only difference between it and the ante-war selections being that it was composed of politicians

•



## 132 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

of two parties instead of one ; leavened, however, by one Labour Member by way of conciliating the democracy. Looking back on my term of office as Secretary I see the years that have been wasted, and the injury that has been done to our children, by the evil influence of " Party " ; which, whatever might have been the political complexion of the Government in power, blocked the way to any considerable advance in educational legislation, because all Governments cared more for their own skins than for those of the people. Every suggestion of amendment was considered, not on the basis of whether it was good for the people or their children, but on that of whether it was expedient from the party point of view, and for vote-catching. What wonder, then, that the logical consequence followed, and in Parliament each party opposed what the other proposed, whether it was good or bad from an educational point of view. Politics were supreme, not education.

## IV

### THE PARIS EXHIBITION

I WAS one of the Royal Commissioners for the Paris Exhibition, and it fell to one of the Sub-Committees of which I was a member to collect and select various objects illustrating elementary, secondary, and art and science education in the United Kingdom. We got together a very good lot of exhibits and thought that it would be interesting and instructive to teachers and the public if, before sending our collection to Paris, we organised an exhibition at South Kensington, both of the objects actually selected and also of those which, in view of the limited space allotted at Paris, could not be included in our exhibit, but yet were worth showing to the public in this country. We wanted the exhibition to have a good send-off, in fact the best send-off possible. We therefore asked the Duke of Devonshire whether he would use his influence to persuade the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII.) to open the exhibition. The Duke agreed to do so, and gave me a letter to take to Lord Knollys, the Prince's private secretary, who communicated our request to the Prince. Subsequently I saw Lord Knollys again and he told me that the Prince had assented and would like to have some notes for a speech. I interpreted this request, of course, as

meaning that he would like to have a typewritten speech, and not merely notes. It was naturally impossible for him to possess the knowledge necessary to speak from notes on such a technical subject, and the request was undoubtedly reasonable and wise. I wrote what I thought would be a suitable speech and sent it to Lord Knollys, who returned it, saying that the Prince would like to have it handed to him on the platform.

Next the Duke of Devonshire followed suit and asked that he also might be supplied with a typewritten speech, and as I really did not feel equal to concocting two speeches on the same exhibition, I asked Mr. Sadler if he would undertake the preparation of the Duke's speech. He kindly agreed to do so, and certainly compiled a speech worthy of the occasion, for which the Duke obtained much vicarious credit. That speech was also typewritten, and was handed to the Duke on the platform. Neither the Prince nor the Duke had ever seen the speeches they had to deliver, but each of them read out his oration without turning a hair. Happily the speeches did not get mixed. They were both successes, and it was exceedingly interesting and somewhat amusing to the real authors to read the comments upon them in the newspapers the next day. I sat next to the Prince on the platform, and subsequently conducted him round the exhibition. He was exceedingly pleasant and much interested in the various exhibits.

I may mention here that on another occasion I was present when the Prince made a speech at the opening ceremony of a large and special London Board School, the Hugh Myddleton School, if I remember rightly. His speech contained more than one refer-

ence to the excellent work of Mr. Diggle, who was then Chairman of the School Board for London, and who in that capacity had taken the principal part in welcoming the Royal visitor. I noticed the exceedingly complimentary allusions to Mr. Diggle in the speech, and as I was walking out of the school by his side I gave him a friendly poke in the ribs, and said, "Diggle, you rascal, I believe you wrote that speech." He replied, "I did!"

Education does not easily lend itself to exhibitions. But I venture to think that the one in question was a great success and very instructive, and that it would be good for education if similar exhibitions were organised from time to time. They would cause the members of Education Committees and County Councils, teachers, managers, and all who are charged with the education of our children, to take greater interest in it, would enable them to see the best appliances, the best organisations, and the results of the best teaching, and to acquire knowledge which they could advantageously apply to the schools for which they were responsible.

## V

### CITY DINNERS

A FORM of entertainment to which I was pretty constantly invited, and which I fully appreciated, was the City dinner. I do not attribute this hospitality to any personal affection on the part of the City Companies, for the invitations suddenly ceased when I left the Board of Education. But, as is well known, these Companies give considerable sums to education and control large educational endowments. Besides which, at that time, some public attention was being drawn to the large funds they possessed, and it was suggested in some quarters that these might be more profitably used if they were devoted to the service of the State than if they were expended on festivities. The Companies, probably, therefore thought it worth while to enlist my sympathies for their educational work through the medium of these dinners. I found them very enjoyable functions, especially as in those days I had not fallen from grace by becoming a tætotaller; and being blessed with a strong head, I could compete on equal terms with any alderman. They were also interesting; there were some dignitaries, such as the Dean of St. Paul's and the Constable of the Tower, and the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, who were present at almost every dinner, and I gathered that they attended

such functions pretty nearly every night. The Lord Mayor, of course, had only a transitory duty during his year of office, but I was filled with wonder and admiration at the prowess of the Dean, the Constable, and others who were constant attendants and who seemed always to take their full share of the provender, both solid and liquid, and on whom years of such feasts appeared to have made no impression.

I had often to make an after-dinner speech on these occasions, and the first time I was asked to do so—without previous notice—I fear that I floundered a good deal. But I determined that there should be no repetition of that. I therefore composed a speech in laudation of the hospitality and liberality of the City Companies and of their educational work, committed it to memory, and fired it off at every dinner at which I was called upon to speak, the only change necessary being the unavoidable reference to the particular benefactions of the particular Company which gave the entertainment. I noticed afterwards, more than once, that this proceeding on my part was by no means singular, and that others (one of whom was a distinguished member of Parliament) had adopted similarly convenient methods.

The waste seemed to be enormous, and the extravagance reckless in the extreme. For instance, at one rather small dinner on the 31st March there were strawberries heaped in large dishes, and served with cream, as if it was July. There was a glowing bank of red geraniums and other costly flowers down the middle of the room in the centre of the horseshoe table, and the feast generally was of a most expensive kind. I inquired of one of the officials of the Company whom I happened to know personally what, approxi-

•

mately, might be the cost per head. He said about six pounds. I venture to hope that the rigid economy we all have necessarily practised during the great war will produce a permanent improvement in the habits of the people, even extending to the festivities of the City Companies; that a better use may be found for their surplus funds, and that the interruption to these extravagant orgies may be permanent.

## VI

### COURT

It is supposed to be a bounden duty of the heads of Departments—a duty which particularly lies on those appointed by Order in Council, as I was, and therefore under the Sovereign's sign manual—to be presented at a levee, and subsequently to attend such functions at least once each year. For some abstruse reason, intelligible to the Court officials but to nobody else, it is also conventionally necessary that a man should be “presented” to the Sovereign whenever he takes up a fresh appointment or has a new dignity or Order conferred upon him. The fiction, I suppose, is that in his new capacity he is unknown. At other times he merely attends the levee. As on all occasions the proceedings are exactly the same, the distinction appears to be merely an odd survival of some archaic usage, retained for the gratification of Court officialdom. I was presented, I think, five times—when I became Secretary of the Education Department, and when I was made successively Companion of the Bath, Knight Commander of the Bath, Secretary of the Science and Art Department, and Secretary of the Board of Education. I was never, however, present at an investiture. When I was made a Companion of the Bath the



death of the Duke of Clarence prevented any investiture being held, and when I became a Knight Commander of the Bath and received a summons to Osborne, I was in bed with influenza. On both occasions Royal Warrants were sent to me, which served the same purpose as investiture, and which are interesting documents, as both bear the autograph signature of Queen Victoria.

There always seemed to me to be a distinctly humorous side to levees. They were not particularly pleasant functions; the uniform was ugly—which did not matter—and heavy—which did matter—as the crush was great, the rooms hot, and the waiting long. But these discomforts were redeemed by the curious and comical spectacle of a great number of the most distinguished men in the land, decked out with every decoration that this or any foreign Court can bestow, silver and gold and ribbons of every colour, being packed into pens like sheep, and ushered from one pen to another at the discretion of the Yeomen of the Guard. We are accustomed sometimes, some of us, to accuse women of bedizening themselves *ad nauseam* with bright stones and ornaments. But any one who has been to a Court function must be convinced that men are just as fond of decorating themselves as women. The latter have a reason in some cases, for no doubt the brilliant stones, worn in moderation, fittingly supplement their costumes; but what excuse has any man for dressing up, covering himself with gewgaws, and exhibiting himself like a peacock? We preach simplicity and extol democracy, but we seldom practise either.

It is well that a man who has rendered services

to the State should carry a mark of distinction, but that is exactly what he does not, and cannot, do, unless he is in uniform of some kind. And a civilian is never in uniform except on the rare occasions when he attends a Court function. At all other times he is simply one of the crowd. Why should not the example of France be followed, and a Legion of Honour constituted, conferring a right upon all holders of real deserved and unbought honours to wear a tiny and inconspicuous badge at all times? Perhaps the answer is that they are so seldom deserved, so far at any rate as civilians are concerned.

I was once invited to a Court ball. The regulation attire is distinctly funny, and comprises (*inter alia*) white kerseymere breeches, white silk stockings, and shoes with gilt buckles. I knew nothing of the rule, so, being entirely without experience of Court balls, I went in my levee uniform, wearing trousers and boots. Half-way up the stairs at Buckingham Palace one of the officials stopped me, asked my name, and inquired politely enough whether I had permission to wear trousers. I was naturally rather taken aback; but recovering myself, I said, "No; I did not know that any permission was required, but that if they were not allowed, I was quite ready to come next time without them." That did not appear to appeal to his well-regulated mind, and he neither laughed nor vouchsafed any explanation (which he probably thought was not needed), but said, "Sir, I must report you to the Lord Chamberlain; you may pass on." I need hardly say that I never heard from the Lord Chamberlain on the subject, and that if I had it would not have mattered in the least. I passed on into the ballroom, sat

down and watched some members of the Royal Family dancing a quadrille, but I soon came away, as I knew hardly any of the Court crowd, and it was not amusing. Besides, I had become sadly conscious of my illegal trousers among the medley of white legs. I think I was invited to another Court function, either a ball or a concert, but I did not go, and then invitations ceased.

The garden parties alike of Queen Victoria, King Edward, and King George were much more enjoyable, whether they were at Buckingham Palace or at Windsor. There was no dressing up or decorations or any formality. Perhaps they were not so select (as the phrase goes) as the Court balls; for they were not confined to a few titled people, but for that very reason they were pleasant functions, as one always met numbers of friends and acquaintances, many of whom one seldom had the opportunity of meeting elsewhere. That ordinary morning clothes were the rule, and that the function was out of doors instead of in a stuffy crowded room, as well as the fact that I was always accompanied by my wife and daughter, added to the pleasure.

When Queen Victoria died I received a command to go to St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle on the occasion of her funeral. The nave was moderately filled with Peers, members of Parliament, and others not of sufficiently high status as to be admitted to the choir. There were many curious personalities of many nations, and plenty of gorgeous uniforms. I noticed in particular one recently created Privy Councillor of generous dimensions, a personal friend, who, blazing in a brand-new uniform, looked for all the world like a huge gold bug. The waiting in the

chapel was long, as the cortège was late, the gun-carriage having, it was stated, broken down en route. When it drew near, the gates of the chapel were shut. What followed struck me as being singularly impressive. There were three thundering knocks, the doors flew open, and in came the heralds, the rest of the procession following; the Royalties, English and foreign, their suites and other privileged persons. That was the only time I ever saw that villain of all the ages, the German Emperor, and I was, I remember, surprised to see that, instead of being the fine-looking man I had always pictured him, he was quite a small, insignificant-looking person. I have already said something, perhaps not over-flattering, of English Orders, but the German decorations worn by the Emperor's suite were legion, and seemed supremely ridiculous. Their breasts were covered, and they had in addition bars stretched right across their chests, from which depended a whole string of medals and crosses of all kinds and descriptions.

When the service in the choir was over, and the mourners had filed down the chapel, we who were in the nave went up to the Castle for luncheon, not before we wanted it. I placed myself under the guidance of the Bishop of Ripon, Dr. Boyd Carpenter, a good and delightful friend of mine, who knew the Castle ways and by-ways intimately, and he was of great assistance to me. The luncheon, a stand-up one, was served in St. George's Hall. There was rather a crowd, but as my good friend the bishop had got me in early, I had a front place, which I took care to keep, and the crush did not matter. There was plenty to do in handing plates and glasses

to those in the rear rank, and I got a good deal of amusement out of a fat old Turk who stood just behind me. He reminded me of the farmer at a rent dinner who, when he was handed by a footman a plate of cheese cut up into small squares in order that he might help himself to one of them, said, "Thou'st helped me very liberal, Jan, but I'll see what I can do," and then proceeded to take the plate and consume the lot, no doubt with feelings of thankfulness to "Jan" for having cut his portion into such nice little mouthfuls. The old Turk after a similar fashion grabbed a dish of cold cutlets or rissoles or cakes or whatever it might be, ate the whole at top speed, then returned the empty platter, and asked for another full one, which he treated in the same fashion, and so on through a long series of dishes. I never knew who he was, but obviously he was a member of the Turkish Embassy, perhaps the Turkish Ambassador himself. Anyway, he was a man of great capacity.

I was present with Lady Kekewich in the nave of Westminster Abbey at the coronation of King Edward VII. Except the ladies in their jewels and best dresses, and the men in uniform, gold lace, and Orders, there was not much to see during the long period of waiting for the arrival of the King. The oddest and most amusing feature was the arrival of the Peers, whose funny little coronets made them look as if they came out of the pages of some fairy tale, or as if they were part of a comic opera. The enormously long trains of the Princesses (some, perhaps most, of them German) were equally absurd. They had neither beauty nor utility. The last to come out of the choir after the function ended was

some little princess of comparatively low rank (a German, I think), and when she saw that the rest of the procession had disappeared, she tucked up her train and pelted to the door as fast as she could. Altogether it was a very tiring and not very edifying time, and I am glad that I had no opportunity of being present at the similar function when King George was crowned, as I had then retired from office, and, naturally, after having given dire offence to the Government, received no invitation. I am told, however, by some of those who had seats in the Middlesex Guildhall, just opposite the door of Westminster Abbey, that the scene outside was very striking, and that it was most interesting to watch the arrivals and departures, especially the latter in the case of the peers, many of whom, like wise men, directly they got outside the door, stripped off their robes and coronets, threw the former over their arms, put the latter into their pockets, and hurried off to find their carriages and conveyances, clad after the ordinary fashion. A perfect ovation, I understand, was accorded to the Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Germany ! Now they are finding it difficult even to secure a haven of refuge among any civilised people.

## VII

### SCHOOL OPENINGS, ETC.

My predecessors rarely, if ever, attended any local function, such as the opening of a school or the laying of a foundation stone. Nor did they ever, so far as I am aware, make any public speeches on education. I was, however, of opinion that if the Secretary, whose signature they so often saw, appeared sometimes to local authorities and teachers in the flesh, it would cause the wheels of administration to run easier, provided, of course, that he said nothing contentious, and confined himself to the view of education that was taken by the Government of the day. That was not difficult, because all Ministers find a political advantage in supporting education ostensibly and in public, though some of them may feel in their heart of hearts that it ought to be limited to the amount that the people can absorb without affecting prejudicially the control over them of the Church and the landlords. Accordingly I went to many places, delivered speeches, interviewed local authorities, school managers and other persons interested, opened schools and bazaars, and laid foundation stones. I think the result was useful in preventing friction, and also instructive both to the local educationists and myself. I have as souvenirs

of those visits a considerable number of gold and silver keys and silver trowels, which I greatly prize, as recalling to my memory many pleasant and hospitable friends. These functions also afforded opportunities of inquiring into the local facilities for education. The most perfect system I ever saw was at Festiniog in North Wales, where the elementary and secondary schools were more completely co-ordinated than in any other place I visited.

An incidental advantage derived from these visits to the provinces was a knowledge of the industries of the different localities and their influence on education. My host used generally to say to me on the morning after I arrived, "What would you like to do before the school-opening in the afternoon? Would you like to see some schools?" I always answered, "Heaven forbid! I have seen enough of them. They are always with me. I want to see something of the industry of the place." In that manner I acquired a knowledge of many industries—*e.g.* the Eston iron and steel works at Middlesbrough, the fish pontoon and trawlers at Grimsby, the woollen factories at Keighley, cotton at Manchester and Bolton, granaries and docks at Liverpool, and so forth. Those visits to industrial works bore fruit in many ways. For instance, on more than one occasion I was taken to see children working half-time in mills, curiously enough always with the object of enlisting my sympathy for the system. But I came to the conclusion from personal observation that such employment was bad both for the children's health and education, and longed more than ever for the time to come when some Government would have the courage to put an end to it. For years

.



every true friend of the children has condemned it, but, as is commonly the case, politics have blocked reform. Every Government has been afraid that, if they took action, they would lose the precious votes of some of the parents who were profiting by the children's labour, and the health of the children apparently weighed nothing in the scale against the possibility of such a catastrophe.

## VIII

### CASTE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

It has been the constant policy of the Education Department and the Board of Education to confine the higher appointments of officials, both inside and outside the Office, to graduates in honours from Oxford and Cambridge. The only exceptions to this rule were some very efficient clerks who were transferred, when the Department was first established, from the Privy Council Office, and also one or two University men who were not graduates in honours but personally connected with the Lord President of the day, and who were accorded a special treatment, which in less euphonious language is usually termed a "job." The result was to form a mass of united opinion which was consistently and strongly opposed to any inroad upon the time-honoured practice. Until Mr. Acland promoted some sub-Inspectors (certificated teachers) to be Inspectors, no rift had been made in the aristocratic homogeneity of the inspectorial body, and no second division clerk was ever promoted to be an Examiner, until about ten years ago. One promotion only was then made, in response to pressure in Parliament, and it was looked upon with much disfavour by the higher officials. There may have been more since, possibly, but as to

that I know nothing. Education Ministers in successive Governments, Liberal as well as Conservative, maintained the freehold of the old Universities, because the weight of opinion of the permanent officials was always overwhelming. If there was a man among them of more liberal views than the rest he was consequently powerless, in the face of the hostility of his colleagues, to influence the Minister, and, moreover, he naturally shrank from setting up against himself the cabals and intrigues which are so common, and so rarely exposed, in the Civil Service. From the time of Lord Lingen onwards the secretarial staff—*i.e.* the Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries—whose opinion, of course, carried the most weight, had been Oxford or Cambridge men of classical or mathematical distinction. I remember only one exception, a financial Assistant Secretary (Mr. Tucker), a very able man who had been transferred from the Exchequer and Audit Office.

As is stated above, Mr. Acland to a certain extent broke down the barrier so far as the Inspectors were concerned, and, according to my experience, the efficiency of the staff did not suffer, but was rather increased, as a result. Many trained certificated teachers are graduates of London or other modern Universities, and possess, in addition to a liberal education, a familiarity not only with the difficult work of the teachers but with the life of the children attending the school and the circumstances of the parents, of which the Oxford or Cambridge graduate is almost necessarily profoundly ignorant. If such teachers, elaborately trained at the public expense, are not fit to inspect an elementary school, then the money spent on their training has been wasted, or the system

of training is defective. There is no escape from the alternative. The Board has had complete control of the curriculum in training colleges, and if it does not produce what is called culture, or fails to improve the social qualifications of the teacher, the Board is responsible. No one of course supposes that all teachers, or, for that matter, any other body of professional persons, can be turned out on the same level, but if there is not even a small proportion who are fit to judge the work of an elementary school the Government system must be a failure. But it is not. The real reason of the exclusion of the teachers was that they were up against an aristocratic caste, which did not consider them "gentlemen," and that, besides the supposed stain of their origin, they had been further contaminated by service in elementary schools and contact with the working classes, although that very service ought to be their best credential and ought to be insisted on in the case of every candidate for an Inspectorship, whatever his antecedents may have been. The argument has been used that if experience is to be a factor of appointment, a teacher appointed to be an Inspector could seldom remain for forty years in the Civil Service and therefore could rarely, if ever, earn the full pension offered under the statutory regulations applicable to the Civil Service. To do so he would have to be appointed before he was twenty-five years of age and to retire at sixty-five. It would, however, certainly be unreasonable and undesirable to exclude older teachers, and as, in the present day, retirements are constantly forced upon Civil Servants at the age of sixty or sixty-two, the offer of a full pension would under present conditions be a mere sham. The remedy is to revive an old and

.

salutary arrangement by which a man appointed to a position requiring special qualifications was permitted, within certain limits, to add to the period of his actual service the years spent in acquiring such qualifications.

Some years ago an attempt was made by the Board of Education to extend the "Caste" policy, through the secret influence of the Government Inspectors, to appointments under the local educational authorities, but, unfortunately for the aristocratic bureaucracy, somebody let the cat out of the bag, the official document was brought to light, and the attempt failed before any serious mischief had been done. The National Union of Teachers was, happily, too strong for the Board of Education. The teachers were described in that wonderful and libellous document as being, as a rule, uncultured and imperfectly educated, wedded to the old grooves in which they worked for so many years, and looking back with fond regret upon the Revised Code!

Within the Office the privileges of caste were even more stringently enforced. I have already mentioned that, so far as I am aware, only one second division clerk has ever been promoted to be an Examiner. Yet, over and over again, in regulations laid down by the Treasury for the Civil Service, promotion to the higher division has been conceded as due by right to any second division clerk of special merit—and the Examiners are the higher division of the Board of Education. The result is, that while in other offices second division clerks are freely promoted, the unfortunate man who is assigned to the Education Office in that capacity has no chance. Staff appointments, as they are called—that is, appointments made

for the performance of special duties—are no adequate substitute for regular promotion, since they lead nowhere and mean stagnation, whereas the higher division clerk is in the running for the highest positions in the Service. The work done by the Examiners does not exceed in difficulty, so far as my knowledge goes, that of the higher staff in other offices, such, for instance, as the Board of Trade or the Local Government Board or indeed any other. Their duties are supposed to be non-mechanical and to require a habit of mind which only a liberal education can vouch for. But, according to my experience, it is impossible to draw an exact line between mechanical and non-mechanical work, and all that can be done is to provide that the mass of the work assigned to the higher staff shall be of a different character from that placed with the lower staff, and of a higher quality. I admit that under these conditions it is difficult to ascertain the comparative merits of second division clerks. I suggested, however, to the Duke of Devonshire and Sir John Gorst an arrangement by which something might perhaps be done to meet the difficulty. There were several divisions of Examiners, three or four Examiners being assigned to each division, to whom was entrusted the duty of dealing with a particular area, or particular subjects. I suggested that one or more second division clerks should be attached to each division, “devilling” (to use a term common in the legal profession) for the Examiners. In such a position they would have had ample opportunity to show their abilities, and indeed they might even have acquired some of the social qualifications—though perhaps not the aristocratic status—that are so precious to the Board of Education. But my

suggestion was waved aside by the Duke of Devonshire and Sir John Gorst, and came to nothing. I commend it to the attention of the present heads of the Office. It is quite absurd to suppose that, out of the great number of second division clerks in the Education Office, none can be found with sufficient brains to tackle non-mechanical work.

At the root of the whole matter is the appointment of all the higher staff by nomination, and not by examination. That method results in the continuous selection of candidates who possess special qualifications, not for the work to be assigned to them, but for entry into the sacred circle of high-class University men. But there is no sufficient reason for the continuance of the practice, which does not appear to provide a staff which is in any way superior to, or more efficient than, that of the same grade in other Departments. I do not wish to be understood as casting any slur upon the general efficiency either of Examiners or Inspectors, which leaves little to be desired after they have been taught their duties, but the outcome of the practice is that preference is given to a particular class, that the rights of other classes both to appointments and promotions are disregarded, and that a system is maintained in regard to a particular portion of the Civil Service which has long been terminated in nearly all other Offices—that is to say, the system of placing patronage in the hands of particular individuals, and thereby opening a door to favouritism and jobbery. It would have been easy enough for the Secretary who recommended, and the Minister who made, the selection to have taken advantage of this open door. But so long as the Secretary and the Minister were opposed to doing so,

the selection was at any rate honest, in so far that the man on the list of candidates who possessed the highest University qualifications was usually chosen. I do not recollect a single case of this kind of jobbery during my Secretaryship, though there were previous instances. Lord Cranbrook, Mr. Acland, and the Duke of Devonshire always made honest appointments of those whom they considered the best men, that is to say, those most highly qualified by University successes.

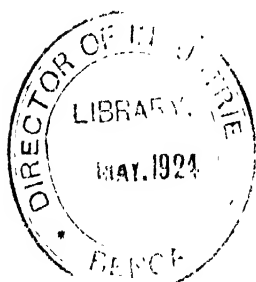
I will give an instance of the mode of appointment under the ducal regime. It was the same both for Examiners and Inspectors. When there was a vacancy I used to go to the Duke with the book of candidates, containing some hundreds of names, and say to him, "I have brought the book of applicants for appointments in order that you may select an Examiner (or Inspector) to fill a vacancy." The Duke turned over the pages in a helpless manner, heaved a deep sigh, and said, "Can't you make out for me a select list, containing, say, eight or ten names of those with the best qualifications?" The list was accordingly made and brought to him. He used to puzzle over it and finally ask, "Which do you think the two best?" That was a very difficult question to answer, as usually several candidates were practically of equal university merit. Finally I selected a couple, generally absolutely equal in qualifications as "qualifications" were understood in the Department, and the Duke used to puzzle again. Then I generally said, "Well, I suppose you must put something besides absolute merit into the scale. The last man appointed was from Oxford, we had better have one from Cambridge this time"—



156 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

or "Mr. A. has Conservative, Mr. B. Liberal backers," or "Mr. A. has better recommendations from distinguished persons than Mr. B." Those considerations usually determined the final selection, and it was fair enough, so far as the system of nomination permitted.

But the time is not far distant when democracy will be justified of her children and demand that every man shall have an equal chance by the introduction of examination universally as the basis of appointment.



## IX

### DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL

PROBABLY the most unpleasant of all the various duties attached to the headship of a State Department is the enforcement of discipline. It is not easy to draw the line between excessive strictness and undue laxity, both of which are equally detrimental to efficiency. Some heads of Departments that I have known have been martinets, and their subordinates were consequently discontented and smarted under a sense of injustice—conditions which produced meetings and protests, and which wasted valuable time. Others allowed their staff to play instead of work, and exercised no sufficient supervision over the heads of sub-departments, who naturally took their cue from their superior, the result being again waste of time and money.

Both when I was a senior Examiner (acting as chief clerk) and when I was Secretary, the maintenance of discipline in the office and outside it was one of my principal duties and difficulties. The key to success always appeared to me to consist in thoroughly just methods of administration, accessibility to all, and full and impartial consideration of, and inquiry into, any complaints they had to make or grievances to explain, and in treating all equally without personal

bias. The great secret was to be always the same to everybody and at all times, never varying in temper or manner. Such methods had incidentally the result of ensuring popularity, and a popular head can get more work out of his men than an unpopular one, because they will back him up when any stress of business suddenly occurs. In most cases I did not consider it right to delegate an inquiry to a subordinate official, or to rely absolutely on the statement of the immediate superior of the man who complained. At the same time, care had to be taken not to overrule the latter, except after the fullest investigation, as such a result was likely to impair his authority and to encourage insubordination. But if any grievance was serious and well founded, it was always remedied, whatever the consequence might be.

The effect of such a policy, speaking generally, was to inspire confidence, especially in the lower sections of the Office. I never aimed directly at popularity, but at causing the wheels of officialdom to run smoothly; and they certainly did so, at least in the Education Department, so long as I was in office. I can look back with pleasure to the willing and hearty support that I obtained in times of pressure from all grades of my subordinates in the Education Department. They were always ready to do their best to meet emergencies and to cope energetically with any sudden access of business.

One of the difficulties was the overtime that it was necessary to allow at seasons when the work was specially heavy. I disliked overtime; it is not only an extravagant system, and liable to be abused, but if it is excessive, the long hours mean overwork

and a reduction of efficiency. It was therefore discouraged as much as possible, though it could not be altogether avoided, as the amount of work varied greatly at different seasons of the year; and although it was arranged that the annual holidays should usually be taken when the work was lightest, overtime was occasionally absolutely necessary.

I am afraid that it is a common practice in the Civil Service either to keep the permanent staff at the lowest possible level, with almost continuous overtime, or to maintain it at a maximum sufficient for all times of the year, so as to avoid overtime while causing unemployment. My practice was to employ a staff ample enough to deal with the work averaged over all seasons, so as to reduce overtime as well as laxity to a minimum. In particular cases, when some section of the clerical staff was affected by some special pressure, arising possibly from a proposed Bill in Parliament or Minute of the Department, it was usual, in cases where men had to stay late but were either not entitled to overtime or did not care to ask for payment for it, to give some slight extension of annual holidays. I found that such a recognition of merit was much appreciated, and that it had the effect of producing most willing and active service at the time when it was most required.

The cases calling for severe disciplinary measures were comparatively few in number. Most of the complaints submitted to me were trivial enough, and though sometimes delicate and difficult to handle, merely required settlement or adjustment. Sometimes, however, some offence was alleged to have

been committed which imperilled a man's position and consequently his livelihood. In the Civil Service there is, beyond a reprimand, practically no penalty except dismissal. Degradation from one class to another is possible, but is very sparingly used, for the reason that if a man is degraded he is constantly under a cloud, he is a pariah among his fellow-officials, and his usefulness is materially impaired. He loses his energy, hates his superiors, and is a centre of unrest. I do not remember ever degrading a man, but, as might have been expected in a staff of nearly a thousand, some cases occurred which called for the extreme penalty of dismissal. Looking back over the twelve years that I was Secretary, and the whole thirty-five years of my service, I wonder that they were so few.

Incidentally, since my retirement I came across a case in which, I thought unjustly, the method of degradation had been resorted to. I could, of course, do nothing to help the unfortunate victim. But he happened to have been for many years a Volunteer and a Territorial, and when the war broke out went on active service, and I was intensely amused, and I may say gratified, to hear that he had, in the course of events, attained the rank of General, thereby I trust confounding his detractors!

The allegations of improper conduct or dereliction of duty were by no means always well founded. I will give an instance. When I was acting as chief clerk I was once sent to a cathedral city to inquire into an accusation made by the Bishop and others against an Inspector of schools. The story was that he had been found by the police in a house of evil repute. It had not lost in the telling, for there was

much garnishing. It was said, for instance, that he had been pulled out of a cupboard under some stairs where he had been hiding, covered with dust, because the cupboard had not been swept for years! I found, after full inquiry, that the only truth in the story was that the police, when looking for another man, had found the Inspector in the house bargaining for a piece of bric-a-brac (of which he was a collector) which he had seen through the window. There was not a particle of evidence to suggest any impropriety, or that the Inspector had any idea of the reputation of the house, and I had the pleasure of acquitting him without a stain on his character. I am sorry to say, however, that the good Bishop, though he did not absolutely decline to accept the verdict, yet with a pious disregard of Christian charity and a lack of confidence in official justice, still pressed for the removal of the Inspector to another district. No doubt, if the Bishop had expressed himself satisfied, given his imprimatur to the decision of the Department, and made some amends by social amenities, the good people of his cathedral city would have ceased to believe the tittle-tattle and lies that had been served up to them. But he did none of these things; and as the position under the circumstances was naturally most unpleasant for the Inspector, he was eventually *promoted* to another and much more important district, where he continued for many years to serve the State with complete credit and efficiency.

The cases of actual dismissal were few, not exceeding some half-dozen—a very small number considering the size of the staff. The causes were drunkenness and immorality, either during official hours or in

## 162 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

connection with official duties. No Examiner, however, ever was convicted of either of these offences, and, on the whole, it may be said that the standard of conduct in all classes of officials was very high.

## X

### EXPENDITURE AND WASTE

THE cost of education and educational administration is continually increasing, partly from unavoidable causes and partly from extravagance. The increase can hardly be too large so far as it is devoted to improving education ; but, up to recently at any rate, it has been in a not inconsiderable degree attributable to the endowment of bureaucracy.

The increasing number of schools and scholars, the greater proportion of teachers to scholars, grants to secondary schools and Universities, raising the teachers' salaries more nearly to a living wage (which they have never yet had) and their pensions to a more reasonable level, and, generally, improvements in education, are responsible for the greater part of the excess. So far the increment is not only unobjectionable but highly desirable.

But the cost of administration can undoubtedly be largely reduced without impairing the efficiency either of the Education Office or of the schools.

Previous Secretaries and I myself always honestly endeavoured, with more or less success, to limit the cost of the administration of the Central Authority to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the total Education Estimate.



Now, I believe, the expenses of the central administration are no less than 7 to 10 per cent of the Estimate, and, further, the rates, by the Act of 1902, have been applied not only to the support of the Council (formerly Board) schools, but to that of the Voluntary schools also. Moreover, the Board of Education has no such control over the expenditure of local authorities as it had over that of the School Boards, and the Treasury seems in recent years to have exercised little control over the Board of Education, so that neither of these bodies are subject to any considerable limitation of their expenditure by an outside authority.

One principal cause of waste is the monstrous size of the inspecting staff. Every school is, or was before the war, visited annually or oftener both by the Inspectors of the Board and by those of the local authorities, the effect being, not to improve the efficiency of the schools, but to harass the teachers and continually disturb the work of the children.

The Board of Education, as they make grants to schools from public money, have, of course, both a right and a duty to satisfy themselves that their grants are duly earned. Before the Act of 1902, which made the local authorities responsible for maintaining all elementary schools in a condition of efficiency, no doubt the practice of the annual inspection of each school by the Board was justifiable, though even then I was of opinion, and actually recommended, that it should be dispensed with in the case of the large School Boards. I doubt whether the Duke of Devonshire understood either the recommendation or the reason for it ; but he, in accordance with his usual practice, turned it down. The first

time such a proposal was made was in connection with the Bill of 1896.

Now, however, since every school is inspected by a local authority, which is responsible for its efficiency, no excuse for the maintenance of such a system seems to exist, for all that the Board of Education need do is to satisfy themselves that the condition of elementary education in each and every area of a local authority is such as to assure the Board that the authority has properly performed the duty entrusted to it by Statute. For that purpose the annual inspection of every school is wholly unnecessary. All that is required is that one or more Inspectors of the Board should have a roving commission over a wide area and visit a sufficient number of schools to enable them to report on the general state of local education in that area. Then the State grant, instead of being handed out in meticulous doles, might be paid quarterly or monthly to every local authority, on the certificate of the Inspector. The result would be not only a very large decrease in the inspecting staff, but also an enormous reduction in both the higher and the lower grades of clerks and officials, as a very large part—probably the greater part—of their work consists in examining and tabulating the reports on individual schools. Obviously it would be an unpopular change so far as the members of the official staff are concerned, and would require some courage on the part of a Minister to effect; but it would be, I should imagine, gratefully accepted both by the local authorities and the teachers.

The Inspectors attached to each area would, under the system of devolution suggested, have more oppor-

.

tunity for acting as advisers to the local authorities. I always looked forward to seeing—after the Act of 1902 came into operation, and had, as a beneficial result, removed the financial difficulties of the Voluntary schools—the Board of Education and its officers exercise functions of a more advisory and of a less inquisitorial character by devolving detail upon the local authorities while maintaining an absolute general control.

The change suggested would, by what is probably a very conservative estimate, have the effect of reducing the cost of the administration of elementary education by the Central Authority by at least one-half, while it would remove from both indoor and outdoor officials of the higher grades much of that part of their duties which is unworthy of their high qualifications.

A very fertile source of waste in the Civil Service is the unnecessary multiplication of sub-Departments, due in the main to the well-founded belief of the higher officials that the degree of their own importance is proportionate to the numbers of clerks and officials that they control. I cannot say, of course, whether this fact has anything to do with the multiple sub-divisions more or less recently created in the office of the Board of Education. But, judging by experience, I should be inclined to think that much economy might be effected by combining some of them, inasmuch as every sub-division means, not merely clerks, but a highly paid superintending staff. Multiplication of assistant Secretaries means money, and usually waste.

I always desired to see the Board of Education shorn, as far as possible, of its miserable mechanical

duties and elevated to the position of the highest authority on all matters of education. No steps, however, appear to have been taken in that direction, and if information on any subject is needed, outside committees are formed to supply it, committees, for instance, on research and modern languages, besides the permanent consultative committee, which seems to do little beyond producing long and careful reports, which are probably not often read by those to whom they are addressed, and seldom acted upon. Of course, if the Board is to be made more efficient as an authoritative advisory Department, it should include persons competent to deal with the whole subject of education, and committees, if they are regarded as necessary, should be appointed by the Board and not by any other authority, and should report to the Board, their reports being subsequently laid before Parliament.

## XI

### DENOMINATIONAL AND BOARD SCHOOLS

I HAD a somewhat undeserved reputation (fostered, of course, by the Tory intriguers inside and outside the Office) of being a supporter of Board schools as opposed to Voluntary schools because the former were undenominational. That was not so. I always held the balance even between the two classes of schools, as far as the Government of the day permitted me. It mattered not one straw to me officially or personally what kind of religious knowledge (if any) was taught in any school. That was entirely outside my province. All that mattered was secular efficiency. No man in my position, having ample opportunities, day by day, of comparing Board and Voluntary schools, could help giving, in a certain sense, a preference to Board schools, as they almost invariably were better built and more convenient for teaching purposes, and therefore more efficient and healthy, and they were also better taught than the great majority of Voluntary schools. In the case of Board schools also the Department had far the greater power to enforce efficiency, especially, of course, when a Tory Government was in office. In the last resort a bad School Board could be defaulted, that is to say, turned out of office, and either a

## DENOMINATIONAL & BOARD SCHOOLS 169

fresh election could be ordered, or a Board could be set up of persons nominated by the Department. The largest School Board that was ever defaulted in my time was that for Tottenham. In that case a fresh election was ordered, and an excellent result obtained. But in some instances a new election would have been useless, and a new Board was therefore nominated by the Department. A typical case that I remember was that of a Board in a rural district, which consisted mainly or entirely of farmers, who were elected on pledges, not to enforce attendance, but to get the children out of school to work in the fields, as much, and as soon, as possible, in defiance of the law. They wanted cheap child labour. I turned them out. A Board was nominated from a number of persons chosen by the Inspector of the district, who explained that he had based his selection as much on physical as on educational qualifications, as he expected that the new Board would probably have to fight their way to the School Board Offices. One of his selections was a retired policeman of exceptional stature, *thew*, and muscle, who, the Inspector thought, would be a well-qualified leader of the School Board in the *mêlée* that was likely to ensue! The expected difficulty did not, however, occur, and the result of the procedure was altogether satisfactory.

As regarded the Voluntary schools the difficulty that always stood in the way of condemnation of the buildings, however bad they might be, was the religious instruction. In order to ascertain of what the religious instruction usually consisted, and of what value the denominational part of it was to the children, I once instructed one of our best Inspectors,

•

a very honest and sensible man, to attend a number of Voluntary schools during the time fixed for religious instruction, to observe of what it consisted, and how it was given, and to report what it was worth. The Inspector could not examine in religious subjects—that was prohibited by law—but there was nothing to prevent him from being present during the instruction. On his return he reported that the Catechism was said by heart by all the children, who usually gabbled it together, and that the rest of the religious instruction, almost without exception, was of an undenominational character, such as might be given in any Board school, and that that part of the instruction alone was of any value to the children. He said, “If this is what the denominationalists are fighting for, they are fighting for a shadow.” I am afraid that the teaching of the Catechism is, or was, responsible for much inefficiency in elementary schools. Nor can I see that such teaching is of any value for children. The doctrinal part of the Catechism consists of the parts relating to the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which the children cannot possibly understand. In that respect, perhaps, they do not differ from adults. The real reason why the Church has always so firmly maintained her hold upon the schools is not a belief in the exceptional efficacy of her doctrinal instruction as a way to heaven, but the hope that children educated in such schools will remain members of the Church of England in after life, or will at any rate be accounted as such, and that the nominal and fictitious adherence of the majority of the people to the Church will serve as a valid argument against disestablishment. How far that hope has been, or is likely to be, realised

## DENOMINATIONAL & BOARD SCHOOLS 171

may be inferred from the increasing number both of Nonconformists and of persons who attend no place of worship, compared with the immense preponderance of Church schools over those of any other denomination. It has always seemed to me that religious teaching, and especially doctrinal teaching, is out of place in an elementary school, and that the duty of giving it should not be imposed on the school-master, except perhaps so far as simple religious teaching or Bible reading (instruction common to all Christian denominations) can be combined with moral instruction. Doctrinal instruction is surely the business of the clergy, and the best place for it is the Sunday school.



## XII

### THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION

SINCE for four years nothing has counted but the war, and still nothing counts but the consequences of the war, the "religious" question, like nearly all other questions of purely domestic interest, remains in a state of suspended animation. After politics have returned to more or less normal conditions it will doubtless revive, and probably will then have a better chance of settlement than at any previous time. We may anticipate that such will be the case for more than one reason. Both on account of the effacement of classes during the war, and because of its sympathy with its great democratic Allies, the nation as a whole will have become more democratic, more keen for liberty and equality in all things, including religion, and, being concerned with greater questions, will be less inclined to tolerate the wasting of the Parliamentary time of its representatives in considering how the claims of any particular denomination can be met. The matter will then be settled, probably with the consent of everybody except a few extremists. True democracy (not the sham of the past) will be in the ascendant, and the religious, as well as the secular, side of education will fall within the great and general democratic reorganisation. Surely in no truly demo-

cratic country can a system be permanent which imposes a religious test on teachers of secular subjects, or which permits schools to be reserved for the doctrinal teaching of a single denomination, when they are entirely supported by public money drawn from the rates and taxes paid by persons of all denominations. To a teacher who is a Churchman every school in the country is open, except a few which belong to denominations other than the Church of England. But to a Nonconformist teacher the doors of no less than 16,000 departments are closed. This is not religious equality, it is putting a premium on Church teachers and holding out a direct inducement to others to profess the creed which will be most remunerative.

The Church of England has always stood in the way of a reasonable settlement, and one of the great political parties, for its own political purposes, has always supported her. But, in the eyes of a large section of the people, the Church of England has now been discredited by the action of her Bishops during the war, and has not, as a Church, shown anything like the same degree of patriotism as has been exhibited by the Bishops and priests of other nations. It may be confidently expected therefore that the political influence of the Church of England after the war will be appreciably less.

The Church of England has always bitterly opposed religious equality in the schools. A large number of buildings (mostly cheap and bad) were provided during the first half of the last century by the Church, or rather by "the National Society for the education of the poor in the principles of the Church of England," the primary object being denominational instruction—not secular, which was simply an appendix. It was

a very necessary one, because it brought financial aid in the shape of voluntary subscriptions, school fees, and State grants, none of which would have been given, or given to the same extent, if the buildings had been used for religious instruction alone. The Church has already been ousted from the control of secular instruction, though even that in Church schools has to be given by a teacher of her own denomination. Probably no one wishes to deny her under certain conditions the use of the buildings for the denominational teaching which was the chief, and indeed the only, object for which they were provided. But the principle of religious equality demands that the school curriculum paid for by the State and the public of all denominations should, if indeed religious instruction is given at all, include only such religious instruction as is not hostile to the tenets of any denomination, or at least any Christian denomination, and that all denominational teaching should be outside the school curriculum, and given, and paid for, by the denomination.

If we admit the principle of religious equality, the main question involved is whether any religious instruction whatever should be given in public elementary schools. It is clear that if we admit that principle, either all schools must be secular or that, if religious instruction is included in the school curriculum, it must necessarily be undenominational, consisting of either simple Bible teaching, or Bible reading, to which might be added the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and hymns suitable to children and with no doctrinal significance. The conscience clause would, of course, still remain in the latter case, and schools belonging to the Jews and

Roman Catholics or any other religious minority might be the subject of special treatment.

As regards the former alternative, I may say that personally I have never been able to understand why religious instruction should necessarily be a part of the State school curriculum. It is true that in this country, where every one who professes any religious tenets at all, accepts, or professes to accept, those of some denomination or other, only denominational teaching can fully satisfy the requirements of religious parents, whether Churchmen or Nonconformists, and therefore not merely secular instruction but also simple Bible reading or teaching must necessarily be supplemented by the clergy or ministers of the particular Church to which the parent belongs. The Nonconformists, who are commonly spoken of as if they formed a single Church, but who in fact consist of many different bodies, each with different religious doctrine or ritual, have therefore always provided distinctive supplementary religious instruction for the children in their respective communities, outside the instruction in the school, and surely, if she so desired, the far richer Church of England could do likewise.

There is much to be said, even in the interest of the Church of England herself, for a secular system. When the school building happens to belong to the Church of England, it might be used out of school hours or on Saturdays or Sundays for the doctrinal teaching of that Church, the attendance of the children being optional. Such an arrangement would not violate the general principle that all denominational instruction should be paid for by the denomination, because (1) the Church may be held to have paid

for the use of the building by its original provision, and (2) any fee charged would be simply a voluntary contribution. The Church would have of course to pay the teacher, who should not be one of the teachers in the secular school for obvious reasons. The Church should also pay for wear and tear, in proportion to the use made of the schoolrooms, and for lighting and warming during its tenancy. In other cases, *i.e.* where Church school buildings are not available, special Sunday schools would have to be provided.

Nonconformist Sunday schools are numerous already. Church of England Sunday schools are not. If it were necessary for the maintenance of Church teaching that Saturday or Sunday schools should be established in practically every parish, it would instil an energy into the Church that is at present greatly lacking, and do much more to gain the attachment of the parents and children than any amount of so-called denominational teaching in week-day schools. The Church would have to *work* to attract the children and the parents. The Roman Catholics can obtain the attendance of children at their religious instruction without compulsion. So can the Jews. Why cannot the Church of England do likewise? The answer is that the Church itself is unattractive because its government is weak and its organisation defective, and the consequence is that its ministers are hopelessly lethargic, and have no need or stimulus to commend themselves and their ministrations to the people at large.

Under the arrangements suggested, the secular system would be a definite and final settlement on the broadest possible basis, the teaching of dogma and

doctrine would be entirely left to those whose business it is to explain or attempt to explain them, and the teachers would no longer be subject to any religious test whatever, or placed, as probably many are at present, in the difficulty of either teaching what they do not believe, or being handicapped in obtaining situations. The system has been tried. Some School Boards exercised the power they possessed under the Education Act of 1870, of excluding all religious instruction, and I never heard that in their districts there was more irreligion, more immorality, or more crime than in others. I do not know how far—if at all—the County Councils have continued the practice of their predecessors.

The second alternative would be no more acceptable to the Church of England than the first. The advocates of the present system appear to assume that no teaching is religious teaching or of any spiritual value, unless it is denominational. If indeed it were the fact that such teaching is essential for the spiritual welfare of children, there would be a complete case for the introduction of compulsory dogmatic teaching into every school which is at present undenominational—that is to say, even into the Council schools. It is not, apparently, suggested even by the extremists that in such schools the teacher should give the dogmatic instruction or be subject to a test (though that would be the logical outcome of the principle advocated, for the children ought clearly to obtain the same supposedly essential benefits as those conferred by denominational schools), but it is proposed that the clergyman or minister of the district should have the right of entry during the time set apart for religious instruction and teach the children according

--

to the expressed desire of their parents. This proposal is supplemented by a demand that the teaching should be allowed to be given by deputy, under the direction of the clergyman. But such arrangements would assuredly fail to secure religious regularity under any safeguards that could be devised.

The struggle for the children would unquestionably be severe, and the canvassing unseemly. There would be bribery in the shape of Church charities, Christmas coals, and the like, and the creed of many parents and children would depend on the material benefits held out to them. Yet the effect would probably not be at all proportionate to the pressure. The majority of the people of this country do not trouble themselves about creeds or denominations, but send their children to the nearest and most convenient school, of whatever religious complexion it may be. The ordinary British mother, it has been justly said, cares more whether her child has to cross a tramway or a crowded street on its way to school, than whether it is taught the Catechism or not. The same inference may be drawn from the fact that only a comparatively small number of parents withdraw their children under the conscience clause from religious instruction in denominational schools, and that in the Council schools the conscience clause is a dead letter. In many rural as well as urban districts the conscience clause is quite ineffective for other reasons. In most cases the people care little or not at all whether the Catechism is taught to their children or not, for they are shrewd enough to be aware that it is never understood and therefore quickly forgotten. In some localities they are afraid of the parson and the squire, and if their religious convictions differ

from those of these autocrats, they fear to publish them abroad by availing themselves of the conscience clause. The intolerance of some of the squires is almost inconceivable. I was once staying with one of them, a good landlord, charitable and popular, and he took me to see "his" school, which served two parishes, all the land in which belonged to him. As I was walking through the schoolroom, I spied a dirty and illegible sheet of paper fixed to the wall some ten feet above the floor. I asked the teacher what it was, as it was too high up for me to read. "Oh," he replied, "that is the conscience clause." "But," said I, "you are bound to exhibit that clause in a conspicuous place, so that any Nonconformist parent who comes into the school may see it, and understand that he has a right to withdraw his children from religious instruction if he thinks proper." The squire cut in. "Oh," he said, "you need not trouble about that sort of thing here. Every child in the school lives on my land, and I never let a farm or a cottage to a Nonconformist." I have never heard of a worse case of religious intolerance except, it may be, that of another squire who insisted that all his tenants should be communicants!!

It is obvious that no system of right of entry would have any effect against such tyranny as this. In these localities the squire and the parson will always reign supreme.

The conclusion I have drawn from these facts and a long experience is, therefore, that compromise with the Church of England is impracticable and that, in the not distant future, the common sense of the people will insist on secular instruction alone being given in the hours during which the schools are supported

.



## 180 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

by public money. An enactment to that effect is the only possible permanent settlement of what is called the "religious" question.

There appears to be no reason, however, as has been said above, why in cases where the school was built for denominational purposes, the building should not continue to be used for those purposes, but not in school hours nor at the public cost, nor for the compulsory attendance of children.

### XIII

#### RELIGIOUS MINORITIES—ROMAN CATHOLICS AND JEWS

My official relations with the Catholics were always pleasant and harmonious, owing chiefly to the excellent and broad-minded influence of the Duke of Norfolk, Cardinal Vaughan, and—in later years—of Cardinal Bourne. Of the Duke it is impossible to speak too highly; however strong his desire to assist his fellow-Catholics might be, it never moved him from what was right and just, and he was as deeply sympathetic with both teachers and children as with the managers of the schools. It was quite useless for the evil-doer to attempt to obtain any support from the Duke on account of their common creed.

There was an occasion, for instance, when a Roman Catholic priest was detected in falsifying his school returns. He effected his object by a most ingenious device. He altered the vouchers for the school expenditure, so that the totals in the return made it appear that much more of the annual income had been paid away than was actually the case, the result being that a considerable balance was left in his hands which he could, and did (I believe), use for religious purposes. One of the items, for instance, was a payment of two pounds ten for five tons of

gravel at ten shillings per ton for the school yard. It was an easy matter to alter (in figures) five into twenty-five and two pounds ten into twelve pounds ten. All that was necessary was to insert two figures, and that process enabled him to put ten pounds into his pocket, or perhaps, rather, to apply that sum to Church purposes. As twenty-five tons would have covered the school yard knee-deep, the item attracted the attention of the clerk who examined the accounts, and then the whole proceeding came out. I mentioned the matter to the Duke of Norfolk, who strongly advised putting the case before the Public Prosecutor. The Duke was not the man to condone evil-doing that good, from a religious point of view, might come of it. The case was laid before the Public Prosecutor, who, however, for some technical legal reason, would not move. The Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese was then communicated with, and in a very short time the offender was deprived of his mission. He asked and obtained an interview with me, but he had nothing to say in extenuation, except the curious excuse that he suffered from diabetes!

The action of the Bishop was exceedingly prompt, and I could not help contrasting it with another case, that of a clergyman of the Church of England, whom I attempted during two or three years to oust from all connection with the parish school. At the same time the Anglican Bishop was taking what steps he could to turn the man out of his living. But owing to the provisions of the school trust deed, I failed to get rid of him. The Bishop got as far as to put in a curate-in-charge, but the incumbent got him out again.

I looked forward with special pleasure to visits from Cardinal Vaughan. He was always genial, and he was one of the fairest-minded of men and broad in his views. On one occasion he told me that he should not object to giving the right of entry into a Catholic school to a minister of another denomination for the purpose of giving religious instruction to children of that denomination. I said that I thought that a very liberal view for him to take, as I understood that the Catholic schools were intended to serve religious quite as much as, if not more than, secular purposes, or rather to serve religious purposes throughout their whole use. He failed, however, to obtain any endorsement of his views from other dignitaries of his Church, and he came again, a few days afterwards, and said that the Church and the Bishops generally would not support his views.

One of the main difficulties in Catholic schools was to effect fully the separation of the secular from the religious instruction in accordance with the regulations of the Act of 1870. In such schools the children are taught to say an "Ave" when the clock strikes twelve, and if for any reason the children were not dismissed before that hour and said their "Aves," such a religious observance inserted during the secular teaching would involve forfeiture of the Government grant. When some Irish so-called Education Bill was under consideration, I was asked by the then Secretary for Ireland what the Inspector did if he was present when an "Ave" was said by the children under such circumstances. I replied that such a thing, according to my information, never happened. The Secretary said, "How, then, do you manage?" "Well," I answered, "I under-

stand that on those occasions either the Inspector or his assistant gets on a chair and *stops the clock!*" The Secretary said that kind of thing would never do in Ireland. Indeed, the Irish Education Bills that I have seen have been beneath contempt, being always ruined by bigotry and incapacity.

One curious tangle that had to be solved in my time was a disciplinary trouble (connected with religion) in a Catholic training college. It was a remarkable circumstance that at that time both the Senior Chief Inspector of Schools and the principal Inspector of Training Colleges were Roman Catholics, and both rather demurred to paying a visit to the training college, saying that they might have "scruples." Feeling that perhaps it might be undesirable to employ them under the circumstances, I sent the junior Inspector of Training Colleges instead. He happened to be a hard-headed Presbyterian, and his strong Scottish common sense satisfactorily concluded the incident and obtained peace without the smallest friction or difficulty! The authorities of the training college and students were reasonable enough under proper and tactful handling.

Whether, in any future settlement of the religious controversy, any special arrangements might be made for religious minorities is a question that might well be considered. It is doubtless most desirable that a single system should be applicable to all schools. But, as I once suggested to Cardinal Bourne, it is possible that a solution might be arrived at by rating the Roman Catholic as secular schools, and leaving religious instruction entirely outside the time-table, so that the attendance at it was nominally optional. In such schools the compulsion to attend would come

from the parents, and it would be sufficient. Any children other than Roman Catholic would, of course, either not attend until the religious teaching was over, or leave before it commenced, according as such teaching was given at the beginning or the end of the school meeting. Or it is possible that such schools, or some of them, might be reserved for Roman Catholics, provided that there was ample and available accommodation for the rest of the children in the district.

If, therefore, the secular system was applied, as I doubt not it will be at some future time to the whole country, the only real obstacle to placing Roman Catholic schools on the same footing as others would be the imposition of a religious test on the teachers, which would be most strongly insisted on. But it must be remembered that there is a special reason for such a test, which does not apply to other schools. I understand (as I have intimated above) that Catholics hold that religion must permeate the secular teaching. For instance, history is very differently taught in Catholic schools and Protestant schools, the reigns and deeds of Queens Mary and Elizabeth being, for example, represented in very different lights. But comparatively few teachers would be affected, and perhaps an exception might be made to the general law.

In the case of the Jewish schools the difficulty is not so great. There is no reason that I know of why a syllabus of undenominational instruction should not be suitable to the Jewish faith if based upon the Old Testament, or why a teacher of any denomination should not instruct the children in it. It is true that some Hebrew formulae find a place in

the Jewish curriculum, but so long as they are not distinctive of Judaism, they are unobjectionable. The language would not matter.

'On one occasion my friend Dr. Adler, the late Chief Rabbi, headed a deputation to me with reference to some schools in the East End which had been reserved by the School Board for London for Jewish children. The Board had allowed the Jewish authorities to frame the syllabus, which, being based on the Old Testament, they regarded as undenominational. Objection had been taken to it, I think, by an Inspector. I found that the objection was valid, as the syllabus included formulæ distinctive of Judaism, and therefore in that respect violated the law. I suggested that these, which I remember were in Hebrew, should be cut out. The deputation assented, and there was no further trouble.

If the Jewish schools were regarded as secular schools, I think that, as in the case of the Roman Catholics, no difficulty would arise as to the optional attendance of the children at religious instruction outside school hours. There would be very few Jewish children who would not attend it. But it may be that the Jews as well as the Catholics might have to be met by some modification of the general law.

I was always on very friendly terms with many Jewish educationists, and especially with the Chief Rabbi, the late Dr. Adler. I often attended Jewish weddings and functions, and on one occasion the Maccabean Society did me the honour of inviting me, as their guest, to one of the society's dinners. I went more than once to see the great Spitalfields Jews' Free school, of which the headmaster was then

Mr. Moses Angel, who presided over an attendance which numbered children by the thousand, with wonderful ability. Curiously enough, he was uncertificated, and in order to satisfy the requirements of the Code, his second in command had, by a pious fiction, to be recognised by the Department as principal teacher. But the real control was, of course, in the hands of Mr. Angel.

I also visited the London Board schools which were actually, or practically, reserved for Jewish children. The impression left upon my mind is that those schools were exceptionally excellent, and the quickness, sharpness, and knowledge of the children were admirable.



## XIV

### THE LESSONS OF THE WAR

THE war seems to have produced unwonted activity in the educational world, mainly perhaps because the enduring peace that we hope has come to us is regarded as a golden opportunity for setting our house in order generally. Moreover, horrible as it is, war is perhaps the mightiest of national stimulants. It stirs the dormant energies of nations, and compels them to provide new assets to meet the heavy demands of the future. It is no new discovery—though the fact is only now brought home to us in all its force—that education plays no mean part in war, while in peace it lies at the very root of our prosperity. Especially will this be the case in the new peace, for education will be a main factor in repairing the losses caused by war.

I remember, when opening a school at Bolton some years ago, saying that education was the third line of national defence, and I also remember that the Duke of Devonshire, in a subsequent speech, appropriated the phrase without acknowledgment. But it was no mere rhetorical expression, for surely intelligence, self-reliance, and physical strength are no small means to victory. It is now thirty years ago since, in 1890, the development of these qualities

was substituted for bare knowledge of rules and facts in our elementary schools, and we have reaped the fruits of the change during the war. There is nothing new about the improvements proposed in our educational system, for there is not a single one which was not equally necessary, perhaps even more necessary, before the war. But it really does seem that the Education Act of 1918 may, sooner or later, sweep away many absurdities—and wicked absurdities to boot—and put an end to the laxity that we have tolerated so long. We have turned youths and girls out of school at the very age when they were beginning to profit most by their instruction and to assimilate knowledge more rapidly. We have provided no sufficient means to enable them to continue their education, and we consequently have nullified the teachers' work in the elementary school, and wasted both brains and enormous sums of money. We were afraid to deal with the half-time system, because to do so would have alienated the votes of the parents, to whom the health and future of their children were apparently of less importance than the money earned by them for the family liquor or pot. We have allowed little children to be employed before and after school hours, in early morning and late evening, distributing milk, newspapers, running errands, and so forth, so that they often went to school or came home at night in wet clothes, to the detriment of their health, and were too fatigued to profit as they should by their education. Moreover, we have provided no sufficient system of maintenance scholarships, so that children whose abilities might have been of advantage to the State have been driven to the plough or the mine at an early age

instead of being helped to the University. It is, however, not the war but the experience of many years that has taught us that such defects as these ought to be promptly removed for the good both of the individual and the State. But the war has driven the nail home.

The war has, however, provided its own special lessons in education. First and foremost it has shown us the transcendent value of physical culture. If physical strength is deficient, whether in workers or fighters, the power of the nation is heavily handicapped, and the steam to drive the engine is lacking. It is not only necessary for the sailor or soldier for attack and defence and for endurance, but it is equally so for the service behind the lines, for provisioning and munitioning, and for making and transporting all the material of war. Science can go far, but it cannot achieve victories in war without human power to carry out its teachings. Physical strength is itself the greatest of war material. But that is not all : it is also the most valuable of peace material, indispensable for our industries, our commerce, and our agriculture. It is also all-important for us, as the greatest colonising nation in the world, in order to enable our colonists to deal adequately with the new areas which conquered German colonies and the extension of the empire have opened to them, for it is unthinkable that these colonies should ever be handed back to German barbarity. The lesson the war has taught us is that for our protection and our prosperity hereafter we must avail ourselves of all possible means for maintaining and improving the physical condition of the people. Our public schools—Eton, Harrow, etc.—leave little to be desired in this respect,

and we have, it is true—thanks to the innovations of 1890—physical education in our elementary schools, and we care, after a fashion, for the health of the children. But we have never gone to the root\* of the matter, we have never razed to the ground the insanitary, squalid, and pestilential kennels in which many children have to live both in town and country. I have seen many of them: places in towns where the working man, his wife and three or four children, had to live in a room about fourteen feet square, and where he carried on his work, such as, for instance, mending boots, making and mending clothes, etc., in a corner of the room. I found that there were two reasons why such conditions existed. One was that houses for working men were deficient in quantity, the other that, where they were sufficient, the wages of the ordinary working man were not enough to pay the high rents charged. Nowhere did I find that the working man preferred such tenements to a decent house, if that had been within his means. He was, as a rule, fully conscious of the injury done to his children by living in such places.

Once a London teacher, the late Mr. Clarke of the Bath Street City Road Board school, appealed to me against a bad report by some unsympathetic Inspector, who, by some wooden interpretation of his instructions, had judged his school and his teaching by the same standard that would have properly been applied to a school in a well-to-do quarter. The teacher's employment and livelihood depended on the report. I sent the principal Chief Inspector (Mr. Sharpe) to make inquiries. He reported after his visit: "Not only do I think that the teacher is not to blame, but that he deserves credit for what he

has done in such a neighbourhood, where the people are housed twelve or fourteen thick in a single room, married couples and children sleeping together, and where the walls are so thin that for decent people there is no protection against the horrible language used by their neighbours. You cannot educate children who live in such surroundings." I visited the same school myself afterwards, on the occasion of a little entertainment got up by Mr. and Mrs. Clarke, in which the children took part, and I wondered at the degree of neatness and decency which the teachers had managed to instil into the poverty-stricken and ill-cared-for children. How can it be possible to get physical perfection under such conditions? It is the first necessity, if a large percentage of our youths and girls are not to grow up feeble and stunted, with wasted brains and wasted bodies, to clear away the slums. That is the very root of the evil. Without extirpating it, all improvements in education will fail of their full effect.

In rural districts many of the cottages are still of the smallest and poorest description, and the accommodation for a workman, his wife, and family far too cramped for ordinary decency. There is no bath, water is not easily available, and other conveniences are often of a most primitive and insanitary character. The one advantage they have over town tenements—and I admit it is a great one—is that the children, when outside their dwelling, can live and play in the fresh open air instead of in the foul and fetid atmosphere of a noisome court. In rural districts the cruelties of housing do not include, as in towns, the *vicinity* of the houses.

Another lesson we may learn—perhaps we have

already learnt—from the war, is the enormous value of teaching modern languages in our secondary schools. Latin and Greek have had their day. In times past, when education was only a means of culture and refinement, when it was confined to the moneyed people, and when it was not required as a necessary means to a livelihood, or as a large factor in economic prosperity, Latin and Greek answered their purpose in leavening the ignorance of the nation. They still remain as a splendid luxury, the highest and noblest knowledge for the rich, the leisured, and some of the professional classes. No one desires, I imagine, to exclude them from the instruction given in public schools, such as Eton and Harrow. Most of the boys educated there belong to the classes which get real profit from such teaching. But even there it would be well if the modern side, which is being gradually introduced into our public schools, were made more attractive. At the present time the great majority of the scholarships at the Universities are awarded for proficiency in Latin and Greek, and the principal prizes, including fellowships, are given on the same qualification. The result is that any exceptionally able boy at any public school where there is a modern side has a special inducement, and probably is advised by his immediate tutor, to go on the classical side, and to qualify himself for a scholarship, the obtaining of which would mean immediate money and reputation, and would possibly lead to a fellowship and to *the emoluments of a teacher of the same languages*. The present system is a vicious circle, and a mischievous one. The remedy is to appoint a University Commission of practical men charged with the duty of inquiring

and recommending what proportion of the existing scholarships can be allocated to modern languages, and also, of course, to science. If that proportion was reasonable and the University system modified accordingly, boys who look to their education as a material means to success in life, and who are generally those who most need financial assistance at the University, would have at least an equal chance with those who look forward to a leisured life or a learned profession. The two grooves would take those who are best qualified to run in them.

But time spent on Latin and Greek in the ordinary secondary schools is generally time wasted, and the individual and the Empire do not profit but lose by it. The teaching of Latin in secondary schools has been bolstered up by the old fallacy that a knowledge of it is the surest foundation for learning modern languages. That, if it is true, only applies to a few such languages which form a very small proportion of the world's myriad tongues. But it is not true. French and Italian are an equally good foundation, and they have the advantage that they can be learnt in a much shorter time, and that when they have been learnt they are of practical use. So far also as culture and refinement are concerned, there are classics and magnificent literature in both these languages and in others.

Modern languages have been, if not positively discouraged, at least neglected, in our secondary schools. There existed for many years—perhaps it still continues—a regulation of the Board of Education, providing that if any student took up a second language, that language was to be Latin. No more than two languages might be taken. The first was

almost universally French. No fault can be found with that. Speaking generally, it is more widely known and used in all countries than any other foreign language. But in many places there is a volume of trade with other countries than France or French dependencies. In Middlesbrough, for instance, there is a large trade with Spain, the Spanish iron being, if not essential, yet of immense value for mixing with the British ore in steel making. In other ports there is much traffic with the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries of South and Central America, and with Russia, Italy, Norway, Sweden, etc. But if a student wished to learn the language of any of these countries he was prohibited from learning French. Moreover, he suffered this disability for the sake of Latin which certainly, as I have indicated, served no useful purpose for a student who took up French, and which, moreover, in the limited period of attendance, could never be acquired except most imperfectly. Probably the limit of the average student's reading was usually the first book of Caesar, and, without any depreciation of that admirable book, I may say with some confidence that he forgot very rapidly the little Latin he had assimilated, having no opportunity to increase his knowledge or to use the little that he knew.

When people talk of modern languages they usually appear to forget that there are others just as important for our trade, commerce, and influence as those of Western Europe. Neglect of the tongues of the East has cost us very dear. Those of the Far East we have exploited to some extent in connection with India and our trade. But those of the Near East we have utterly neglected. A few years ago, long before the



war, I made some inquiries as to the existence of sets of type for printing books and other literature in Turkish, Arabic, and the Balkan languages in this country and in Germany respectively. I found that in this country, with the exception of one or two sets at the Universities, they were non-existent. Of Turkish type I could only discover one set (there may possibly have been one or two more), while I found that in Germany there were over forty. I found also that if an English merchant—say at Smyrna—wanted a Turkish-speaking clerk or superintendent it was impossible for him to obtain one in England, and he was driven to employ Germans. That was one of the methods, and not the least important of them, by which the Germans acquired a predominating influence in Turkey. It was a most valuable instrument of peaceful penetration. The case as regards other Near-Eastern countries was the same or worse. No doubt a great improvement will be effected by the present movement for teaching oriental languages, but I venture to hope that “oriental” will be held to include those of the Near East as well as those of the Far East, and that the former will be as attractive to students as the latter.

The third great lesson we have learnt ‘is the value of technology and industrial research. Bearing in mind the experience I had when I made the suggestion to the Duke of Devonshire, of which I have written in another place, I confess that I was surprised and pleased when I saw that over a million was to be allotted to research in the Estimates. I hope that it is all to be applied to *technology* research. It is useless to establish any institution for the purpose of research if it is to be starved. To be effective it

must have everything it requires, buildings, apparatus, scientists, all of the best. It is the last thing in the world that should be done by halves. It is the new knowledge, not the old knowledge, that is all-important in commercial and industrial competition. The Germans have had a long start of us, and we have to make up leeway. Money is essential for success, and money should be spent without stint or limit.

## XV

### EDUCATION REFORMS

THE present President of the Board of Education has a great opportunity. He has already used it in improving (yet not nearly sufficiently) the salaries of teachers, a reform which has been long overdue, in passing a Bill with the object of removing many of the educational iniquities I have mentioned, and in giving further assistance to secondary education, at a cost of some millions added annually to the Education Estimates. He is about, I hope, to spend much more, all for excellent objects.

That he was enabled to do this is due to two circumstances, both of which arise from the war. The first is the suspension of Party Government. In the old days, whatever party might have been in power, any proposal of such increases in the Estimates would have met with the wildest opposition. The senseless doctrine that it is the duty of a Parliamentary Opposition to oppose every proposal of a Government, whether it be good or bad, was in full force, and every Liberal or Tory member was shepherded into the proper lobby, under the penalty, if he voted according to his convictions, of being reproved by the Whips as if he was a schoolboy; and, moreover, he was

likely in that event to be boycotted by his Party and to imperil his seat at his next election.

The second circumstance is that to-day we think, as Mr. Chamberlain would have said, not in thousands, but in millions. Three or four millions is in these spacious days a mere flea-bite, not worth bothering about, when we have been spending six or seven millions a day on war.

What is needed now is to perfect our system by ensuring, as far as is humanly possible, that every child, without exception, whether he comes from the castle or the gutter, shall have the opportunity of obtaining such an education and training as his abilities deserve, so that in after life he may be able to fill the highest position which is suitable to his capacity. Any result less than this means a loss to the State as well as to the individual, while to attempt anything more would be waste of power.

We know that such a system is ideal, and that ideals are always unattainable. But it is our duty to work up to it, and to test every proposal of reform by the consideration, whether it leads towards this ideal, and how far on the road it carries us.

The first necessity is to provide a track, open to every child, from the elementary school to the University degree, or the highest technical school, or school of research. If this track is to be available for all and to fulfil its object, there must be no exclusion or limitation on the ground of poverty. The poor child is as good material for the State as the rich. Therefore, it is essential that, for the child who is qualified to proceed upwards from the elementary school, all fees should be abolished at every stage of his career. This can only be accomplished by the

provision of scholarships from the elementary or continuation school to the secondary school, and from the secondary school to the University or the higher technical school, the condition of holding one of such scholarships necessarily being that the child must have been educated at a public elementary or continuation school. Such scholarships would, however, fail of their full purpose unless they included not only freedom from the payment of any fee, but also a full allowance for maintenance, both during vacation and during term. There might probably and usefully be added some compensation to the parents for the loss of the youths' or girls' labour. There should also be scholarships tenable at the Universities or higher technical schools which would be open to youths and girls from a secondary school who had not received their early instruction at a public elementary school. But these should not be technically maintenance scholarships, although a plea of poverty, duly supported, might be accepted as qualifying for complete freedom from fees, or even for an allowance for maintenance.

None of these scholarships should be paid out of local money, but out of State money. The provision of them is a national not a local duty, for it is not the locality that profits, but the State at large. Locomotion is cheap and easy, and a copious press gives wide publicity to every demand for highly qualified workers; consequently men and women possessing special qualifications seek employment where they are needed, and where they can get adequate wages, not where they are born or educated.

But the boy or girl leaving an elementary school must be fitted by age as well as attainments to enter

the secondary school, and the age must be fixed at the point when they can reasonably be expected, if their abilities are sufficient, to have reached such a stage of education as will enable them to qualify for scholarships, and to take full advantage of them when obtained.

Therefore it ought to be compulsory on the child to remain in the public elementary school, and no child should be accepted at a secondary school until at least thirteen years of age. The present rule under which a boy or girl must enter a secondary school at or before eleven years of age, or be precluded from entering at all, is mere overlapping of the elementary school, and a sop to the well-to-do classes and private schools, as well as a monstrous injustice to children of working men. The working-class parent, who sends his child to an elementary school in accordance with the law, and intends, or hopes to send him to a secondary school afterwards, knows that the child must attend school up to a certain age, but does not know, and has no sufficient means of knowing, that such attendance may be made partly in a secondary school, and that he can transfer the child from one to the other at ten or eleven years of age, and that, if he does not so transfer the child, he is absolutely precluded from receiving secondary education. The effect is that, in numerous cases, children of working men have been compelled to terminate their education at thirteen years of age, and that many brains of special ability have been wasted. In the additional two years from eleven to thirteen, they would probably assimilate as much intelligence and real knowledge as they acquired in all their previous school life. What is the experience

of the ordinary well-educated man and woman? Is it not that up to eleven or twelve years of age their intelligence did not develop at the same rate as it did after that age? And was it not later that they began to see the light and advance quickly? The education given in an elementary school has been largely waste, for we have turned the children out of it at the very age when, for their own sakes, and in the interest of the State, they ought to stay at school. The compulsory continuation schools which we may now hope will be established, unless they are supplemented by a scholarship system such as I have outlined, can only result in raising the education of the masses to a certain level, and will fail in the exploitation of brains to the best advantage.

It follows that we ought to make thirteen the earliest age of entry to a secondary school and probably seventeen the age for admission to a University or higher technical school.

It has been said that education should be free to all, "from the cradle to the grave," because it is a national obligation. To my mind this is true of elementary education in public elementary schools only. The principal reason for the abolition of fees in elementary schools is, not that education is a national obligation (as, however, of course it is), but that, as the State has compelled a child to attend a public elementary school, in default of other means of education, it is its duty to provide the parent with the means of bearing the new burden put upon him by remitting all money payment. But, assuming that it is a national obligation that every child should proceed as far along the educational track as his abilities warrant, there is no reason why the rich

or well-to-do, who do not use the public elementary school, should not pay for the education of their children at secondary schools, Universities, and other places of higher education. They could not be debarred from scholarships, for it is desirable that such a stimulus should be applied to the rich as well as the poor child. It is a matter of brains not means. But their scholarships would, of course, not be "maintenance" scholarships.

Outside the general scheme of scholarships would remain those youths and girls who have not qualified for scholarships in a secondary school. For them there is to be a system of continuation schools with compulsory attendance.<sup>1</sup> They may be held either in the day or evening, and no doubt in populous localities facilities would be given for attendance at either time. These, as well as higher schools, should be of various descriptions, literary, commercial, technical, and for the teaching of modern languages. It would be open to the youths and girls attending to compete for scholarships at the Universities or higher technical schools. The education given should be free of all fees and paid for partly by the local authorities, but mainly by the State. The local authorities might bear some part of the burden, because these youths and girls are more likely than those who have received a higher education to look for employment in the localities in which they live. Training for a particular trade or business should form no part of the instruction given in these schools, but apprenticeship to a trade is not only consistent with attendance at them, but might be accepted as

<sup>1</sup> Such a system is now to be established by law, but without large additional scholarship facilities it means a dead level of education and marking time for the best of the children.



equal to part of the compulsory attendance. It is very questionable whether even such subjects as shorthand and typewriting should be taught in them. The result would be—as indeed our present experience teaches us—an overstocking to meet a temporary demand, with eventual lowering of wages and much unemployment.

There will be little difficulty in establishing continuation schools in towns, except that of obtaining a sufficient number of available and qualified teachers. If they are to come from the staff of the public elementary schools, the burden on the teacher should be eased by staffing those schools so liberally as to enable the teachers of the continuation schools to be excused from attendance at either the morning or afternoon meeting. It will mean a very large addition to the body of teachers, and that is not likely to be obtained until the profession is rendered much more attractive than at present by a much greater improvement than has recently been effected in salaries and pensions.

In rural districts separate continuation schools would be impossible. But the same purpose may, to a large extent, be attained by attaching continuation instruction to the elementary school.

One consequence of what is suggested here would, it is hoped, be the sweeping away of the ridiculous distinction made between youths and girls at the old Universities, and the awarding of a degree to the latter as readily as to the former. It is impossible to understand why any girl or woman should be artificially handicapped by sex as at present, or, for that matter, why they should be ruthlessly excluded from any honour or any profession or employment for which they are qualified.

Another result would probably be that the curricula at the old Universities would be remodelled, or at all events that courses of instruction would be provided, which would enable the student to earn a decent living in after life or to lay a foundation for it. Why, for instance, should not modern languages—placing the broadest interpretation on “modern”—be *substituted*, for those students who desire it, for Latin and Greek? What is wanted from the Universities with their large endowments and great attractions, is an education more suitable to the needs of the people, and which does not need to be supplemented by what may be called “bread and butter” teaching. The “bread and butter” teaching should be given at the University itself.



## XVI

### TEACHERS' PENSIONS

IN 1894 a Departmental Committee was appointed, to which was entrusted the duty of reporting on the steps to be taken for the award of pensions to teachers of elementary schools. The demand for a pension had for years been insisted on by the National Union of Teachers, but, until at last Parliament took action, it had been ignored by the Treasury, in accordance with the parsimonious policy which at that time it always maintained. In the face of the Treasury authorities the Education Department was, of course, powerless.

The claim of the teachers was in an anomalous position, and the grant of a pension involved a new departure. State pensions had been always confined, with a few exceptions, to members of the 'Naval, Military, and Civil Services, the reason being that they were actual servants of the State, working at wages fixed by the State, and paid entirely out of funds provided by the Exchequer. Although the teachers were trained and provided mainly at the expense of the taxpayers, and employed—and required to be employed—under conditions laid down by a Government Department, they were not technically servants of the State, but of the managers of the

Voluntary schools and of the School Boards. They received wages according to the agreements between them and their actual employers, out of money provided from various sources, but of which the rates (in the case of Board schools) and the State grant formed far the largest part. It could not be gainsaid, therefore, that they were at any rate *public* servants, and that their emoluments were derived chiefly from public money, and that under these circumstances it was just and right that an exception should be made to the general rule which allowed pensions to be granted only to persons in direct State employment.

But the chief argument (one that I used freely to the Government) in favour of pensions to teachers has always seemed to me to be the dominant control exercised by the State over their employment. They were trained and qualified for such employment, and *for such employment only*, at the expense of funds provided by Parliament, but though no conditions were laid down as to the amount of the salaries they might receive, their emoluments were practically limited by the amount of the State grant, or (in the case of Board schools) by the liberality or economy of the ratepayers, the consequence being that the average salary was exceedingly meagre, and in most cases was quite insufficient to enable a teacher to save money as a provision for his old age. The Head Master or House Master at Eton or Harrow or other public schools, or the master of a preparatory or private school, can by ability and industry and the popularity which he obtains in consequence, without exercising more than a moderate degree of thrift, amass at least a competence for the years

now at the best, and promotion to which is a mere lottery, dependent on the very doubtful factor of the favour of your employers. We (the State) know you cannot save money, and we condemn you to the workhouse or poverty as the reward of a lifetime spent for the good of the people." What wonder was it that desertions from the body of teachers became numerous? The training a teacher had received fitted him for many other occupations besides that of schoolmaster, and if he were capable and ambitious, and preferred that his light should shine elsewhere than under a bushel—somewhere where his earnings might be higher, and his prospects of promotion, both in money and position, unlimited—who could blame him if he seized any opportunity that might present itself? He had not even the attraction of a pension at the end of his service to keep the wolf from the door.

It was not, however, the duty of the committee (of which I was chairman) to consider the arguments for and against the grant of a pension. Their business was to recommend from what source the pension fund was to come, and the rate and condition of payment. They had the assistance of two actuaries

teachers salaries. In the long run, of course, this arrangement meant a rise in salaries to meet the deduction, and a rise in grants to meet the increased salaries; but it suited the Treasury, as usual, to save money, or pretend to do so, for the time being. As to the rate, it was fixed according to the amount of money allowed by the Treasury. It was inadequate then, it is inadequate now. It still means that on retirement, if the teacher's salary is anything like a proper one, he is compelled to reduce his standard of living to an unreasonable level. What is still needed is a drastic upward move in both salaries and pensions.<sup>1</sup> Both should be paid wholly out of State money—that is to say, out of the taxes—because the work of the teacher is not to educate for the particular locality but for the country at large. The control of the Board of Education should be sufficient to prevent extravagance. The salary should be raised to an amount which will give a real living wage to every teacher. There might be some differentiation of emoluments based on the special responsibilities, difficulties, and expenses in connection with particular schools. But so far as the size of the school is concerned, a small school requires and often obtains as skilful a teacher as a large one

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written a very considerable improvement has been made in the position of the teachers, as regards both salaries and pensions. But it is still, in my opinion, insufficient to render the profession attractive in the present economic conditions.

## 210 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

does, for the duties of the head teacher in such a school, though they relate to a limited number of children, are, if anything, more various ; and, as an subordinate staff is usually less qualified, the burden on the head teacher is heavier. And as regards pensions the scale on which they are awarded, in relation to previous salary, should be the same as that of the Civil Service.<sup>1</sup>

Such an arrangement would bring the teachers into line, as they ought to be, with Civil Servants, and the only real distinction between the two classes would be that, unlike that of Civil Servants, the employment of the teachers would be under the control of the local authorities. There is much to be said for and against the formal recognition of teachers as Civil Servants. If they desire it, in my opinion they have a right to obtain it. But it is very questionable whether then the power of the National Union, and the enormous influence for good and for progress which it exercises on education at present, could be maintained. Bureaucracy is far too dominant even now, and an increase of its power is the last thing to be desired. It and its twin brother, red tape, are the curses of administration, prolific of discontent, lethargy, and injustice. \*

<sup>1</sup> I believe that recent changes have been made to that effect. But if the salaries are insufficient, the pensions will be also.

## XVII

### WOMEN IN OFFICIAL LIFE

WOMEN are now employed in large numbers in the public Offices, but they were jealously excluded from them during a large part of my connection with the Civil Service. Owing to the exigencies of the war, they appear to have been in many instances appointed to clerkships and various positions without adequate inquiry having been made into their individual fitness for the duties to be entrusted to them, and the consequence has been that complaints of their inefficiency became general, and probably, under the circumstances, were well founded. But I venture to think, judging from my personal experience, that if greater care had been taken in selection, and if a reasonable test of capacity had been applied, or perhaps had it been possible to apply it to them, before appointment, their work would not have compared unfavourably with that of the men clerks whose places they supplied. It is unfair to judge the general capacity of women by the standard of those employed in Government Offices during the war.

At the time I entered the Education Department there was not a single woman on the staff, although the Department was, of course, concerned as much



with the education of girls as with that of boys. The curriculum of the elementary school included only one subject which was peculiar to the education of girls—needlework. Cookery, laundry and household work, and domestic economy generally, were excluded from it. The needlework was appraised by the Inspectors (whose knowledge of the subject was naturally in most cases insufficient), with the assistance of any lady whom they could press into their service for the time being, and who was often as ignorant as themselves.

As time went on, however, the disadvantages of such a system became more and more obvious, and at last an exception was made to the male monopoly by the appointment of the Hon. Mrs. Colborne as Inspectress of Needlework. That appointment proved an unqualified success. She was extremely competent, and under her wise guidance a proper standard was established, and new and improved methods of teaching were gradually introduced, both in the elementary schools and in the Training Colleges. She remained at the Education Office for a considerable number of years, and the working women and mothers of families to-day owe much to the unremitting labours of herself and her assistants.

Some years later further progress was made by the inclusion of cookery, laundry, household work, and domestic economy in the curriculum, and an Inspectress of these subjects was appointed. Several ladies filled that position in succession, and all did most excellent and useful work.

The success of these appointments and the growing public appreciation of the importance of the education of girls led to the gradual introduction of women on

and inspecting staff. Several women sub-Inspectors were appointed, and were employed mainly in visiting and reporting upon girls' and infants' schools. I had ample opportunity of judging their capacity and the evenness in which they carried out their duties, and I do not think that, although they had not the university hall-mark, but were usually certificated teachers, their work was, speaking generally, at all inferior to that of the men Inspectors.

For one thing, all the women appointed to the various positions that have been mentioned were possessed of a conscience, which is more than could probably ever be said of the same number of men; in fact, their consciences were sometimes almost too big and caused difficulties. For instance, it was once reported to me that one of the Inspectresses of Cookery constantly stayed at work at the Office so late that she was overworking herself and injuring her health. I sent for her and inquired if this indictment were true. She confessed that it was, but said that she had a large number of forms to send off, and that she did not care to entrust them to any of her assistants for fear of mistakes. Of course I put my veto on the long hours, and told her that she *must* trust her assistants, and that delegation of duties, and the tempering of zeal with discretion, lay absolutely at the root of proper business organisation.

The women Inspectors were most sympathetic, humane, and kind to the children. A somewhat amusing story is told of one of them, who was strongly opposed to corporal punishment in schools, and perhaps was rather more fond of interfering with the prerogative of the head teachers than the rules of the Education Department in relation to that burning

question permitted. On visiting a school without notice, she found the mistress in the act of chastising a little boy. "Oh," she said, taking the cane out of the mistress's hand, "what are you doing? What was his fault?"

Said the mistress: "He was trying to run out of school and play truant."

"Oh," answered the lady Inspector, "caning is not the proper way to correct so small a child for that kind of thing. You should try persuasion. See, I will talk to him myself." She turned to the child to put her principles into practice. But the boy had seized the happy opportunity and disappeared through the school door!

To the best of my knowledge the Education Department was the first Government Office that ever employed women in responsible positions. Others were at last driven to do so by public opinion. Government Offices are always averse to change and innovation, and stick in the old grooves until they are hustled out. Pretty well every business office had, for instance, set up telephones and employed shorthand writers and typists long before such labour-saving arrangements were established in any Government Office. Officials are intensely conservative. Whatever is, is best. What was good enough for my predecessors is good enough for me. Even in the Education Department the employment of women was delayed for years after 1870, though from that date the Department always had had before it, as an example of the value of women in administration, their excellent work on numbers of School Boards. The School Board for London, the first that was established, included one woman, Mrs.

Garrett Anderson, and numbers of the largest School Boards followed suit. Nor did I ever hear that the work of the women on those Boards, or subsequently on other public bodies, such as Boards of Guardians, was in any way inferior to that of the men.

It will always be a gratification to me to remember, in view of recent events, that the Education Department was the first Government Office to recognise the latent efficiency and capacity of women, and to make a beginning in breaking down the absurd disabilities of sex. Progress in that direction is now rapid, and it is to be hoped that it will not be long before all professions are opened to women on the same terms as to men, and that the principle of equal wages for equal work will be established in all.



SECTION IV  
RETIREMENT, CAUSE AND RESULTS

Maneant qui candida nigro  
Vertunt.

JUVENAL.



# I

## THE SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT

SERVICE with such Parliamentary heads of the Office as the Duke of Devonshire and Sir John Gorst was endurable so long as I controlled the Education Department only, Sir John Gorst having little opportunity for successful intrigue, because the staff generally disliked him too much to abet him in his schemes. But that opportunity came to him when I became responsible for the Science and Art Department also. Then he obtained another opening for his talents, and could indulge his propensity for mischief by inciting the officials of that part of the Office against me. The Duke was hopelessly ignorant of the Science and Art Department, its ways and its staff, and fell an easy prey to Sir John's representations, the nature of which were, of course, carefully concealed from me. Sir John was a proficient in the art of stabbing in the back.

Difficulties of administration then reached a climax. They were increased by the fact that the two Departments were housed a couple of miles apart, one at Whitehall, and the other at South Kensington. Neither Department could be left to shift for itself for days together, and I was obliged to waste a considerable amount of time in journeying in cabs or



in the train between the two places. But that was a minor matter. Had I known the real and crucial troubles that awaited me, the undeserved ill-feeling and the intrigues, I do not think I should have undertaken the double duty, but should have asked the Government to find some one else who would attempt it, and to transfer me to some other place. I never had sufficient backing from the Duke or from Sir John Gorst to enable me to exercise proper authority over the discordant elements at South Kensington. Neither of them ever supported me in any instance. The Duke never troubled South Kensington with his august presence. Sir John Gorst, on the contrary, was constantly there, and his ear was always open to the complaints of the officials, often, no doubt, against me, and always behind my back, and I have no doubt that he faithfully conveyed them to the Duke. The staff, speaking generally (for there were exceptions), consistently opposed me, not openly or violently, but with a sort of quiet sustained determination and policy of attrition. Their attitude was probably not caused by personal dislike, for which they had no reason, but by resentment at the importation from Whitehall of a man who was neither an artist nor a scientist, but an organiser and administrator. They regarded me as a round peg in a square hole. If so, I was at any rate in good company, for the same kind of criticism may be applied to the appointments of nearly all Cabinet and other Ministers in former Governments, most of whom, however, have not even been administrators. But the officials need not have shown their resentment quite so openly. If, by working for my retirement from office, they expected to supplant me by a South Kensington expert, they

egregiously failed, and have failed even to the present day. No doubt, however, they considered their own functions much more important than those of the Education Department. I do not agree with them ; and I speak with intimate knowledge of both Departments. While I by no means underrate the refinement and culture which a nation gains from popular art, and always encouraged art in the schools, and while I regard the advancement of scientific research (as I have clearly indicated elsewhere) as essential for economic security and industrial development, it is impossible to forget that the character and the physique of an overwhelming majority of the people depend on the teaching in elementary schools. Science and art are for the few, elementary education is for the many. The former are not, the latter is, an indispensable condition for turning the child into a good citizen, and for enabling him to earn a livelihood and take his proper place in the community. It may be added that the School of Science at South Kensington is not and never was a School or College of scientific research, and there never was any attempt to make it such. It simply trained students and teachers in science subjects. Even now, apparently, the claims of scientific research are being met by the establishment of an institution quite separate from the Science branch of the Board of Education. Why that should be the case is a mystery to me. If the Board of Education is not at present competent to undertake the inquiry, and to make recommendation to the Government in every branch of education, it is defective, and ought to be properly organised for the purpose.

At any rate, I was received with anything but

open arms, whatever the reason may have been. It was naturally not particularly pleasant to feel that I was not a *persona grata*, but I thought that time would possibly produce improved relations, and I should probably have succeeded in obtaining them had it not been for Sir John Gorst. I acquainted myself with the organisation, and interested myself in the Museums and the Art and Science schools. I found many openings for criticism and improvement, but, as far as possible, refrained from altering the existing conditions, in order to avoid friction; and I hoped that, gradually, the Department would become reconciled to the inevitable changes which had obviously to be made. For instance, one of my duties was to inspect the various objects offered to the Museums for purchase—of course with the advice of experts. Some of the objects were extremely beautiful and valuable, and demanded the highest expert opinion. But there was a great deal of what seemed to be absolute rubbish, such as old iron, old tiles and so forth, and judging by the amount of it that was accepted by the experts, a good deal of public money must have been wasted. There was, for instance, a periodical offer of embroidered waistcoat pieces, supposed to be relics of the art needlework of the eighteenth century, and one or two were occasionally purchased. But to an inexperienced eye they seemed as if they might have been of much more recent origin than the date attributed to them, and of small artistic value. Perhaps there is still a supply of them. Sir John Gorst also used to inspect the proposed purchases, but he appeared to have a much higher opinion of the experts than I had; I thought them very amenable to deception as to the

artistic value of many of the smaller articles submitted for purchase and of some of the more important ones. I have no doubt that there are even now in the Museum many faked objects of art, for which considerable sums of public money have been paid. There was room for a very close and searching inquiry in relation to these matters.

There were no complaints about the College of Science, which was in very capable hands, but there were many of the School of Art. On one occasion a deputation of students desired me to give them an interview, as they had many complaints to make. The South Kensington officials for obvious reasons strongly objected, saying that the deputation ought to have come to *them*, and *they* would have reported the result. They did their utmost to keep my fingers out of the pie. But I insisted on receiving the deputation myself, always holding the view that the permanent head of the Office ought to be accessible to every one within his jurisdiction who desired to formulate a complaint. Indeed, in no other way could he gauge the justice or extent of any complaint against, or discontent in, the Office. The deputation was received, and, though at this distance of time the details of their complaints have escaped my memory, I remember that they were such as to show convincingly that close inquiry was necessary, and that I took certain remedial measures in consequence which were highly distasteful to the South Kensington authorities.

The administrative scandals disclosed by the deputation, and other reasons, induced me to determine to make South Kensington, for a while, my headquarters, and to inquire personally into the

whole organisation. That was not only within my right, but, under the circumstances, my absolute duty. What followed is so amazing as to be almost incredible, and may serve as an apt illustration of the intrigues I had to contend with. The Duke wrote to me, and said he had received a letter from Sir John Gorst (necessarily inspired by some of the South Kensington officials) requesting that I might be forbidden to carry out my intention. Probably no greater insult could have been offered to the permanent head of a Department, for it amounted to telling me that I could not be trusted to set my own Office in order. I replied that I was head of the South Kensington as well as the Whitehall Department, and that I conceived it was my right and my duty to control both, and to attend one or the other according as, in my judgment, it was necessary or desirable. I added that under the circumstances, as Sir John Gorst was technically my official superior, and as he desired to interdict me from South Kensington, I could not carry out my intention to make any inquiries there, unless he (the Duke) would intervene and give me his express sanction, which I considered I had a right to demand, and I asked him to give it. The Duke, however, for what reason I do not know, perhaps simply from laziness, or hoping that the storm would blow over, or perhaps because he thought that he might have to face the crowning calamity of Sir J. Gorst's resignation if he supported me, never did so, and it necessarily followed that from that time my authority over the Science and Art Department was gone. When the Parliamentary heads began to intervene in order to prevent the permanent head from carrying out his duties, and

to place him practically under the control of his subordinates, he had obviously lost the confidence of the Government, intrigue and backbiting had done their work, his position had become impossible, and it was time for him to transfer his energies somewhere else.

I should have very much liked, it is true, to have had a free hand at South Kensington, and to have remained long enough to carry out many much-needed reforms. It was especially in my mind to improve the School of Art and to make it a model school, particularly as regarded design, and to re-organise it so that it might serve as an example to be followed by all the other Art schools in the kingdom. It was certainly not that at the time of which I write ; the Birmingham school, for instance, was infinitely superior, and better organised.

Moreover, as the Board of Education had then come into existence, and its new buildings in Whitehall were in course of erection, I looked forward to being able to unite the administrative work of the two Departments in a single establishment, which has now been, to some extent, effected.

I had myself carefully looked into and approved the plans of the new building in Whitehall designed for that purpose. I saw the promised land, but did not enter into it. The new building was badly needed, independently of the advantage it offered in combining the two Departments in a single organisation, for both were most indifferently housed. The existing accommodation in Whitehall, though a conspicuous feature of that thoroughfare, and containing good and spacious rooms on the lower floors, was, and probably still is, so far as the upper portion of the

building is concerned, an insanitary, ill-ventilated rabbit-warren. The rooms in that part of the building had always been, and probably still are, assigned to the lower clerical staff, whose health apparently is considered to be of little importance. I sympathised with them, but was powerless to mend matters. The buildings at South Kensington in which the Science and Art staff worked were, if possible, worse. Perhaps the latter are now improved, but I observe that the former remain untouched.

## II

### THE EDUCATION BILL OF 1902

THE passing of the Education Act of 1902 practically terminated a position which had become intolerable. I was only just sixty-two years of age and in full health and vigour. But I had committed two crimes, one against the Office and the other against the Government of the day. That against the Office consisted in the fact that I had been Secretary for twelve years, which was too long an innings. There were, no doubt, several men who thought they had a chance of succession, and who considered that they had a perfect right under the circumstances to intrigue and misrepresent—a too common method in the Civil Service. I relied unduly on the loyalty of those whom I had ruled justly, and on the gratitude of those I had helped.

My crime against the Government consisted in warning them (as I conceived it to be my duty), when the Education Bill was under consideration, that the application of the rates to the maintenance of denominational schools might provoke resistance from the Nonconformists similar to that which was offered in former days to the Church rates, the opposition to which I well remembered. I pointed out that Nonconformists would naturally object to be compelled



to pay for the teaching of the Anglican creed. The answer that was given to me at the time was that it would not matter to the Government, as all Non-conformists were already opposed to them in politics. The Government scouted any idea of justice, so long as they thought that no harm could come to them politically. The injustice to be inflicted on Non-conformists was not considered at all, or considered only to be dismissed with contempt, and the Government thought (to use an expression employed by a prominent Minister) that, even if the Nonconformists resented it, their resistance would soon "fizzle out." That turned out to be the fate of the Government and not of the Nonconformist resistance. The mere suggestion, however, seems to have given dire offence. No doubt it was represented as showing animus against the Bill and disinclination to help in framing it. However that may be, from that day the Government ceased to consult me on the Bill and ignored me as far as possible. More than that, the Parliamentary heads of the Department appeared to view with extreme suspicion every recommendation and suggestion I made in the course of my ordinary duties, and I was hampered in every possible way. It was not by any means pleasant, as, of course, my subordinates knew the position. I then had no doubt that matters had reached a crisis; but as I had long intended to retire at the end of March 1903, when I should have qualified for my full pension, it did not trouble me much.

However, at the beginning of October 1902, Lord Londonderry, who had been selected (Heaven only knows why) to succeed the Duke of Devonshire as President of the Board of Education, sent me a

message that he wished to see me, and at our interview he communicated to me the desire of the Government that I should retire. I naturally asked the reason. He replied that the Government wished to put some one in my place whom they could rely upon to administer the Education Act of 1902 in accordance with their views. This was, of course, a stupid insult worthy of Lord Londonderry, for there was no ground whatever for the imputation that I could not be trusted. I had served under both Liberal and Tory Governments, and no man in any Government or in the Education Office knew anything of my political creed. Lord Londonderry added that he wanted somebody who was a "glutton for work," a phrase of which he seemed somewhat proud, as he kept on repeating it. He intimated, I suppose, that I was not such a "glutton for work" as he wanted; but as he had had, in the short time he had been President, no opportunity for judging my capabilities, I can only assume that he got his information from some interested quarter. He made no concrete accusation against me, however, and so, with gross unfairness, gave me no opportunity of defending myself. Indeed, I should not have done that in any case, as it was not worth my while, nor should I have been disposed to pose as a criminal in the dock, especially before such a Minister as Lord Londonderry. I merely said in reply that I had always intended to leave the Office at the end of the ensuing March, but that I had no objection to going earlier, and I suggested the end of the current month, October. He agreed, and said that arrangements might be made by which I remained technically Secretary until the end of

March, so that I might qualify to receive my full pension.

Therefore, on the last day of October 1902 I left the Education Office at the usual hour without any formal leave-taking, and I have never entered its doors since. Not being a rich man, and thinking then that I could not afford to leave at once, technically as well as actually, and to sacrifice a year's service for pension, I accepted Lord Londonderry's offer. But I have regretted ever since that I did so, for the ensuing five months were the most unpleasant time of my life. The game was not worth the candle. I was a Civil Servant still, and my mouth was closed. People, especially those of the Tory persuasion, thought that I had been suddenly suspended for some grave offence or dereliction of duty and behaved accordingly, and I became aware that all sorts of tales were being bruited about which I was prohibited from contradicting. For the moment I became a pariah. It was an exceedingly uncomfortable position, and all I could do was to lie low and look forward to the time when I should have the right of free speech, when official barriers would be removed, and I could make a fresh start in fresh work. The only reward I obtained for my long service was that my retirement at sixty-two years of age, instead of the legitimate limit of sixty-five, cost me some two thousand pounds, no small matter to a man in my circumstances. I never received a word of thanks from any Government, Tory or Liberal, nor the smallest recognition on their part of what I had done or tried to do for education. Happily there were a considerable number of persons connected with the Department, including the great body of

teachers, who cared more for education than for clericalism or party politics, and whose judgment was far more valuable than that of any body of hack politicians.

Undoubtedly I might have served my own interest better had I taken more pains to cater for reactionary Ministers, and to modify my views to suit theirs. But I never was a toady, and I always acted on the principle that, come good or come ill to himself, the principal adviser of the Parliamentary head was bound to give his honest opinion on whatever question was submitted to him, and that, if he did not, a grave responsibility might rest upon him. He was equally bound, of course, to carry out to the best of his ability any decision that might be arrived at contrary to that opinion. No one who was reasonable and just could object to such a principle; but, unfortunately, many Ministers are so brimful of conceit and so suspicious of motives that they cannot be placed in that category.

As regards the attitude—I may perhaps call it the policy—that I adopted and maintained throughout my Secretaryship, I find nothing which I regret and nothing of which I am, even in the smallest degree, ashamed.

The years were spent in a continual sustained effort to bring greater happiness into the lives of the children and the teachers; to substitute as far as possible attraction for compulsion to attend school; to promote a conception of education which embraced not only its intellectual side, but also its physical, spiritual, and moral elements; and generally to press for advance and development on the lines which had been laid down in the first year of my tenure. That

the advance and development were spasmodic and often slow was due, not to any lack of pressure from the permanent officials, many of whom were strong advocates of progress and whole-hearted in their sympathies with the children and the teachers, but to the apathy and quarrels of Ministers and to the restrictive influence of party exigencies. Among those who in their hearts resented, as I did, the paralysing incubus of educational politics, I may include many of the best of the Inspectors of Schools, and especially the Senior Chief Inspectors and the Inspectors of Training Colleges, the men who were in closest touch with the schools and the teaching profession.

Such is the story of my retirement, so far as I know it. Secrets are well kept in the service of the Crown, and if there were other reasons than those I have mentioned, they were never communicated to me by any member of the Government or by any Civil Servant. If there were any such reasons, they were based upon lies. I have no doubt that lies, cabals, and intrigues were at the bottom of the whole business. There is no long tenure of any particular position for any honest man in the public service. He always comes to outstay his welcome. But what can be expected in a country in which corruption lies at the very root of government ?

From the end of October to the beginning of April I was, for the first time for many years, an idle man, —idle not voluntarily but by compulsion. I was paid a salary that the Government certainly had no right to give me ; but as I technically continued in office it stopped my mouth, which was no doubt the intention of the Government. Insult was added

to injury by the fact that the business of the Department, or at least some of it, continued to be transacted in my name. Long service and record counted nothing to those who wanted to serve their own miserable, and most unjust, political ends.

The five weary months came to an end at last, and on my first day of freedom I attended a dinner of the Devonian Athletic Club, at which I enjoyed the pleasure of being able to speak my mind, and I trust I took full advantage of it, though the occasion, of course, had its limitations.

### III

#### AFTERMATH

IN this country official politicians of very advanced age and incompetence are included in Cabinets on whose deliberations the welfare of more than forty millions of people depends. Judges who ought long before to have been superannuated decide suits of vital importance to litigants, Bishops vainly attempt to rule their dioceses after feebleness of body or mind has made them valueless or incompetent. No age has been fixed for the retirement of Cabinet Ministers, Judges, or Bishops, though the very importance to the people of the offices they hold demands that to them, above all men, such a rule should be applied.

It is, no doubt, equally necessary in the case of Civil Servants, and after one of the Royal Commissions on the Civil Service had made a report on the subject, the age of retirement was fixed very properly at sixty-five. That regulation was made with the full consent of the service, which regarded it as embodying a compact between them and the Government.

But no sooner had the compact been made than it was broken. Men were pensioned off at any age from sixty upwards, not on account of failure of

health or incompetence, but according to the taste and fancy of the heads of their Departments. As soon as a man reached sixty years of age, however able and industrious he might be, he had no secure tenure, and any excuse might be invented to get rid of him if he did not commend himself to his superiors by sufficient toadyism or flattery. It was a very unjust and very expensive innovation.

This new practice which ensued on the broken compact the Government took advantage of to justify their action in my case in answering a question in the House of Commons. My age gave Tory clericalism and Tory jobbery their opportunity of inventing stories of ill-health, failure of energy, and so forth. But, as a matter of fact, I was just as capable in mind and body of hard work as when I was first appointed Secretary of the Education Department, so I had to consider what I could do so as to obtain occupation for myself and, if possible, still to be of some use in the world. Old Civil Servants who retire at the age of sixty to sixty-five usually consider that they have finished their work in life, and that they deserve what is cynically termed "a well-earned rest" for the remainder of their days. They betake themselves to some suburban villa or country cottage, and spend their time in such intellectual pursuits as keeping poultry and raising flowers. That period of their lives is no good to them or to anybody else, and I have noticed that it was likely to be a short tenure, which perhaps, under the circumstances, did not matter. If they have previously lived strenuous official lives (which is exceptional), the relaxation is too great; if they have not, they still miss the daily routine and the regular ordered work. Cogs in a



wheel soon rust if cast upon the scrap-heap, and I have noticed that the days of the ex-Civil Servant, who sets himself to enjoy a perpetual holiday, are usually short.

That kind of idling, however, never commended itself to me, and I had no desire to face its probable consequences. I had always lived the strenuous life, even during holidays. It was my creed that, if a man's usual employment consisted of sedentary desk-work, his holiday should take the form of hard physical exertion. For many years, therefore, I spent it in salmon-fishing, than which there is no harder physical exercise, living at a farm-house on plain, wholesome food, and never staying in for any weather. Believing, therefore, that I had yet some unexhausted vitality, and that every man ought to work as long as he was able to do so, I looked for some other employment.

Whatever else I might have been indebted for to the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Londonderry, and Mr. Balfour, they at all events gave me a good send-off. Probably there has very rarely been a case where so much commotion has been produced by the ousting of a public servant from office, nor any where no valid reason, of any sort or kind, has been assigned for such a procedure.

Consequently there was a good deal of sensation and much public and private comment, which brought my name prominently forward, and was extremely useful from a political point of view. That result had, of course, not entered into the calculations of the Government. I received a very large number of resolutions, addresses, and letters testifying to the esteem in which my work was held by the educational

world, and especially by the teachers. The executive of the National Union of Teachers passed a resolution of a most appreciative and, I think I may call it, affectionate character, and its organ, the *Schoolmaster*, published an article which may be similarly described. I have ventured to reprint both the resolution and the article in the Appendix.

Resolutions also reached me from over twenty District and other Teachers' Associations, including one from the General Association of Church Schools Managers and Teachers, which I mention here particularly because it showed that Churchmen as a body had no fault to find with their treatment. This association, indeed, referred especially to my success in promoting harmony between managers and teachers and the Board of Education, and to what they were good enough to term my "fair and equitable rule." Private letters were legion. They included appreciations from my former chiefs Lord Cranbrook and Sir W. Hart Dyke, and also from the then President of the National Union of Teachers, Mr. Allen Croft, a firm friend who has recently, to my deep regret, passed away.

The Press were very complimentary and sympathetic, and published numerous short articles. The *Westminster Gazette* had a cartoon by Sir F. Carruthers Gould, representing a bishop's legs ascending the steps of the Education Office, while on the staircase wall my name had been erased. That cartoon is one of my most cherished possessions. A week or so later the same journal had a very strong article on what it termed the *coup d'état* that had been effected in connection with the Tory Education Bill, which was then being discussed in Committee. I

## 238 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

felt therefore that, on the whole, considering the excellent introduction the Tory Government had given me, a political life was preferable to the adoption of other alternatives such as farming, literary work, or even business. I was and am still a very convinced opponent of some of the worst features of the Education Act of 1902, as in those days the whole of the Liberal Party appeared to be; and as, naturally, my knowledge of the Act was very complete, it seemed to me that I could make that knowledge useful to the Liberals, and that it also might obtain for me a seat in Parliament.

My first step was to leave the Junior Carlton Club, to which I had been attached since it was first established in June 1864. My father, who was then a Conservative Member of Parliament, had obtained my election to that club as an original member.

But from the time at which I began to get free of the home leading-strings, and to think for myself on political matters, I was never a strong Conservative, and my experience of the Education Department and Board of Education had gradually converted me into an advanced Liberal. Nevertheless I remained in the Junior Carlton Club until my retirement, feeling very strongly that my public usefulness as a Civil Servant would be seriously impaired if I were to show openly by migrating from one political club to another that I had political views opposed to those of the Government of the day. On the other hand, I hesitated to remain at the club, as it seemed to be sailing under false colours. I therefore sought a private interview with the excellent secretary of the club, Mr. C. Martin, and told him that I was not a Conservative but a Liberal on all points of party policy, except that I

was not in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, and I asked him whether it was my duty to resign. He said, "Oh, no! there are numbers of other members here in the same position. There is no reason that you should go unless you wish to join a club of opposite political views or to go into the open as a Liberal." I told him that anything of that kind was for me, as a Civil Servant, quite out of the question, but that what I might do after I retired was another matter. He said that, under the circumstances, he saw no object in my leaving the club. I therefore remained a member until I retired from the Board of Education.

The first political step I then took, after I had (with much regret on account of its social advantages and excellent management) left my old club, was to become a candidate for admission to the National Liberal and Reform Clubs, to both of which I was shortly after elected.

I may mention in passing that my proposer and seconder for the latter were Mr. Asquith and Mr. Acland, and also that my views as to the desirability of Home Rule for Ireland were unchanged even at the time when I was a Liberal candidate for Parliament, but, though I entered the House as an Anti-Home Ruler, I left it thoroughly converted, and have remained a Home Ruler until the recent election placed Home Rule on the old lines outside practical politics.

The next step was to enter the political lists. I did not let the grass grow under my feet. Within ten days after the date of my technical retirement I accepted an invitation to become Liberal candidate for the city of Exeter (practically my native place),

and on the 24th April, after addressing the Liberal and Radical Executive of Exeter, was accepted unanimously by them as prospective candidate for the city at the next election. The Exeter Liberals generally received me with enthusiasm. The sitting member was Sir Edgar Vincent, who had fought two successful contests, in each case with a majority of over 600, had held the seat for more than six years, and was certainly an opponent worthy of any man's steel. He has now, I believe, joined the Liberal party, and he has been created Lord D'Abernon. It was certain that the fight would be a very stiff one. In a city such as Exeter, which contained only about 9000 electors and where every man's party politics were stereotyped, not only for Parliamentary, but also for municipal elections, a majority of 600 was not an easy one to turn into a minority. There were other drawbacks. The influence of the Church, which was really the promoter of the Education Act, was very strong, and, moreover, my brother and his family, who lived near Exeter and were popular there, publicly opposed my candidature, and appeared to treat me as a sort of traitor, because, forsooth, I had dared to prefer my honest political convictions to a dishonest pretence of Toryism, and to my family traditions. Surely a man's politics, like his religion, are his own business and nobody's else.

#### IV

#### BUXTON

IN the interval between the acceptance of the invitation to contest Exeter and its endorsement by the Liberal and Radical Executive of the city I fulfilled an engagement of a peculiarly pleasant nature, by attending the Conference of the National Union of Teachers at Buxton. The Church, no longer wanting anything from me, had deserted me, the Government would have been glad to have proscribed me, but the teachers never varied in their regard or, I hope I may say, their affection. They have been absolutely constant, and are as cordial to me to-day as they were when I was in office ; or when I met the Conference at Buxton. I used the opportunity which the teachers gave me to make a speech in which I attacked the Government for their misdoings, and which was fully reported in almost every daily newspaper. The teachers received me with an enthusiasm which I shall never forget. They bestowed on me, at the suggestion of their President, Mr. Coward, the highest honour that it was in their power to give, and which had never been given before, by making me an Honorary Member of the National Union. To an outside reader this may not convey all that it really implies. The honour was great because it never was

conferred on any man before, and probably will never be conferred on any outsider again, and because it involved admission to the National Union of one single member who was not a certificated teacher. In a later year the teachers gave me the additional honour of making me a Life Member of their Annual Conference.<sup>1</sup>

I valued most highly the appreciation of the teachers, because they knew more intimately than any one else the nature of the work I had done for education, for the children, and themselves. They had been in constant touch and communication with me for nearly thirteen years. They felt the result in their daily lives, in school and out of it, and that they recognised that what I had done was good and just, was far more to me than any empty approbation of any Government. It was all the more acceptable, as the Tory Government had never given me, as I have already said, a word of thanks for my long, and in my later years of office, exceptionally difficult service. Nor did the Liberal Government that succeeded them make up for the omission.

A year or two before the Buxton meeting the Union, through their Executive, had expressed a desire to present me with some token of their regard. The Duke of Devonshire, however, and I myself, thought that it would not be proper for me to entertain the suggestion until I had actually quitted office. After I left the Education Office the Executive repeated their offer. I said in reply that if they thought

<sup>1</sup> When this was written I was the only Honorary Member of the Union. Since then one other has been elected, Mr. Hamilton (for many years the admirable Treasurer of the Union). But he, I believe, is certificated, so that I am still the only member of the Union who does not satisfy the ordinary conditions of membership by the possession of a certificate.

fit to present me with an address I should value it most highly, but that I particularly desired that nothing of any money value should be given to me, as I thought that no man should accept anything of that kind as a reward for having simply done his duty according to his lights, without fear or favour. The Executive accepted my view and accordingly arranged for the presentation of an address, to take place at the Buxton Conference. I expected nothing more than a written address on a sheet of paper or parchment, signed by the Executive or the Secretary on behalf of the Union. I was surprised, therefore, at receiving at the hands of the President a very handsome illuminated book, containing an address which even now makes me blush when I read it. It is treasured by me more than anything I possess, and it will be equally valued by those who come after me. The Address is reprinted in the Appendix.



## V

### CANDIDATURE FOR EXETER, ETC.

AFTER visiting Buxton my next engagement was to meet the Liberal and Radical Two Hundred at Exeter and secure adoption as prospective candidate. The adoption of a candidate as "prospective" only is one of the fictions rendered necessary by the obsolete provisions of the Corrupt Practices Act, as certain disabilities which attach to a man directly he is actually a candidate for a seat are thereby avoided. After my speech to the Liberal Two Hundred, the adoption was carried unanimously and enthusiastically. I believe that this was an exceptional result of such a meeting, inasmuch as hardly any Liberal candidate had ever before obtained unanimous support. The campaign therefore opened with bright prospects.

During the next two and a half years pending the election of 1906 there was plenty to do. Exeter, of course, claimed a large part of my time and I attended many meetings there. But all the time I had to spare from Exeter was taken up by campaigning throughout the country, and speaking in more than a hundred places against the Education Act: Derby, Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester, Blackburn, Liverpool, Newcastle, Shrewsbury, York,

Hull, and Bath were some of the principal cities visited, and there were dozens of others. At the meeting of the National Liberal Federation at Scarborough Mr. Lloyd George moved and I seconded the Education resolution. Mr. Lloyd George made a strong speech, but he was, after his inclusion in the Liberal Ministry, apparently precluded by official amenities from fully carrying out the intentions expressed by him.

The meeting at Newcastle was the annual one of the Free Church Council, and I believe I was the first professed Anglican Churchman who ever addressed that assemblage on such an occasion. But I felt no difficulty in doing so, for if not a Free Churchman, I was a *Fair* Churchman, and it was abhorrent to me then, as it is now, that any Church or members of a Church should obtain any material advantage from the State by professing particular dogmata or doctrines. Moreover, like, I should say, the great majority of Englishmen, my actual religious tenets were extremely simple, and common, as far as they went, to all Christian denominations. I was about as much a Free Churchman as a member of the Church of England, perhaps more so, as I differed, and still differ, from the latter on the question of government as well as of doctrine.

A good deal of my time was taken up in attending meetings on behalf of the Liberal candidate, Mr. (now Sir H. J.) Pocock, for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex, in which I resided. The area of the Division was large, and therefore, besides ordinary meetings in halls or schoolrooms, we used to hold open-air meetings in out-of-the-way places in the evenings, driving to the places selected, hoisting a lantern on

the village greens, and speaking from a cart. The questions put to me at these meetings were delightful, every man, for instance, wanted a duty on imported produce, but only on the kind of produce he cultivated himself. It will be remembered that these were the days of the Tariff Reform enterprise.

I published many articles on educational subjects in magazines, among them being two in the *Contemporary Review*, and numerous letters in political newspapers, not only on education but also on Civil Service reform and other political subjects.

In March 1904 I fought a local election for the County Councillorship of the district in which I live. It was sharply contested, and though I won, it was by a majority of nine only. That, however, was satisfactory, for the electorate in the Uxbridge Division (of which my municipal constituency formed a part) has always been mainly Tory, and for many years always returned a Tory member to Parliament. I was indebted for my victory to a small band of hard-working Nonconformist supporters, excellent men all, who spared no pains or time to secure the result.

In the course of the Exeter candidature I was not long in discovering how vital the possession of plenty of money is for success in an election, especially in the South of England. It may be added that it is even more vital for re-election. Not being a rich man I was unable to contribute to local political bodies, societies, charities, etc., in the same proportion as my opponent, though I am far from saying that he was too profuse in his donations, and I always heard that he kept them within quite a reasonable amount—

## CANDIDATURE FOR EXETER, ETC. 247

as "reasonable" is understood in such matters and in such constituencies.

I found in consequence that my initial popularity was waning, several ward meetings were sparsely attended, few people came to call on me, and it was openly said, even by Liberals, that as I was not rich I was of no use to the city. I was told by the local wire-pullers that I should be beaten by a thousand majority, and I was even advised by them to withdraw my candidature. On returning to London after these meetings I went to the offices of the National Liberal Federation and placed the whole matter before the chief party official. He said, "There is one plan you can try before determining to retire, that is, to pay a visit to every elector whatever party he may belong to, talk to him, leave your card at his house, and make his acquaintance."

On informing my agent of this advice, he said that I could never go through with such an undertaking, that he knew of men who had tried it, and given it up after a few days, and that it would not be possible for me to last out through a visitation of the tenements and slums, in which a very large number of the Exeter electors were, unfortunately, obliged to live.

I thought, however, that as I had begun I would go on and stick to it, and that I would try the plan suggested thoroughly. So I went on with it, and visited some 9000 of the electors personally. I have never regretted it. I look back upon that round of "*visits*" (for it was long before the election and could hardly be called "canvassing") as one of the most pleasant and instructive experiences of my life. It was hard work, but that did not matter. It not only was one of the principal factors of my success

at the election, but it provided a lesson which I shall never forget, for it enlightened me on the manner in which the masses of the people are compelled to live on the verge of poverty, pauperised in fact by bad laws.

Hundreds of houses in Exeter, as indeed in most other cities, are fit for nothing but prompt destruction. But it must be remembered that the tenements of which they consist are very "paying" properties, and that the well-to-do and often influential owners, not infrequently men greatly "respected" in the city, naturally have no desire to be parted from them. Before I entered on my tour of these squalid places I was strongly advised not to talk to the tenants about them, or about the desirability of replacing them by decent houses, and the reason assigned for this advice was that the working men who occupied them preferred to live under such conditions. I did not take the advice; on the contrary I talked freely to the occupants, who were in many cases of a better class than might have been expected, and I found that nearly all would have much preferred small houses in open localities in the suburbs, but that they were tied to the tenements because the rent of such small houses as were available was beyond their means, and the supply was also deficient.

From an electioneering point of view also the experiment was highly successful. I got into touch with the electors, especially those of the poorer classes. I found the working men and women uniformly most courteous, even those who had had the merits of Toryism and Tariff Reform engrained in them for many years, and who had voted consistently for their party candidate both at municipal

and Parliamentary elections. But Chinese labour in the Transvaal, the manner in which the Boer War had been conducted, and the Education Act of 1902, coupled with the fact that most of the electors had a personal knowledge of myself, turned a good many votes in my favour. The few cases in which I met with a discourteous reception or unprovoked insults, were in the so-called "residential" quarters of the city, and, generally speaking, women were the culprits.

When the day of election came all the important streets seemed to be draped in blue—my opponent's colour—which did not look promising. He himself drove through them in an old-fashioned barouche covered with his colours, with four white horses ridden by postillions in blue. I went through the city in a much more humble equipage, but I was rewarded by seeing a good deal of yellow (my colour) in the working-men's wards. As the day wore on lies and libels were freely circulated against me, and in one case I had to commence legal proceedings. The spite of the Tories was almost inconceivable, and it has always been a puzzle to me how people, to whom the political representation of the constituency mattered comparatively so little, could have thought it worth their while to disgrace themselves for the sake of it. Later in the evening my election agent told me that he thought the position "rocky," as there had been bribery going on in certain quarters of the city. That was not cheering, especially as up to the last the Tory wire-pullers declared that they had won by five hundred.

Sir Edgar Vincent and I awaited the result at our respective hotels, as the Returning Officer, I

believe, wanted to keep us out of the way, fearing that there might be trouble when the poll was declared. The result was not known until eleven o'clock, and in the meantime the cheering in the High Street for various Liberal victories was almost incessant. A red rocket was to be sent up from the Guildhall if I won, and a blue one if I lost.

At last, at eleven o'clock, a loud burst of cheering came from the direction of the Guildhall. I said to a good friend who remained with me during those weary hours, "I think we have won; that is too enthusiastic for a Tory shout!" Then I went out into the centre of Queen Street, which runs at right angles to the High Street and was quite deserted, and I saw, a couple of hundred yards away, a mass of men running towards me. I said to my friend, "We have won; if we had not they would not be coming here." Then the red rocket went up, and I went back into the hotel and addressed the cheering crowd from a window.

It was a very exciting time, and there were some special incidents, happily not usual at elections, connected with it.

So sure were the Tories of victory, that they had a funeral procession ensconced in a back-yard, consisting of mourning coaches, hearse, coffin, and trappings, ready to parade the High Street and celebrate the obsequies of the Liberal candidate. They had had four or five thousand mourning cards printed to send to the Liberal electors. Not only that, but a lavish feast had been laid for the benefit of the principal Tories, with plenty of alcoholic drinks, to celebrate their triumph. But the procession did not appear, the mourning cards had, I suppose, to be

destroyed (and paid for), and as for the wines and spirits, I presume they were consumed as a means of driving dull care away.

The day after the election I went home to record my vote for the Liberal candidate for the Uxbridge division, and I went back to Exeter the next day. I found the Tories, of course, smarting under their defeat. The good parsons' wives who met me in the street whisked away their skirts, as if a touch would contaminate them—a proceeding which afforded me considerable amusement and pleasure. There was the usual talk of a petition, but I had never sanctioned bribery, and had expressly forbidden anything of the kind, and I believe that my opponent took the same course.

✓ Doubtless bribery, nevertheless, took place on both sides, and free beer flowed in the public-houses. But such things will always continue in constituencies of moderate size until the Corrupt Practices Act is drastically amended. However much the candidates may discourage bribery, they have always supporters who have no such scruples, and who are ready to spend their own money to secure an election, especially if they expect it to be reimbursed afterwards according to the usual custom.

I have dealt with the general question of corruption in another place.

It is a matter of regret to me that my connection with Exeter did not continue longer. It was the city of my boyhood, and I had a real affection for it, and a deep respect for the working men, who constituted the great majority of the electors.

I believe that they were completely satisfied with the manner in which I represented them in Parlia-



ment, and that, had I been able to contest another election, they would have returned me again, and that their votes would have been cast more uniformly in my favour than they were in 1906. As it was, in consequence of the action of the wire-pullers of the Liberal caucus, the seat reverted to Toryism, though only after a petition, and by the barest of majorities, and it has been Tory ever since.

I have no doubt whatever that the stand I took against bribery was the primary reason that influenced, directly or indirectly, and of course unconsciously, the central executive of the Liberal party in Exeter and the National Liberal Federation in London in withdrawing their support from me as a candidate for re-election. I must not be understood to say that either of these bodies was in favour of bribery; no doubt they were not so, but they were undoubtedly influenced by insinuations, tales, and whispered calumnies, which were set going behind my back so that I could not contradict them.

I refer to the following incident. Shortly after the election of 1906, but also after the return of my election expenses had been sent in according to law to the Speaker of the House of Commons, I was informed by a certain influential Liberal that he had spent £150 on the election, which had not been included in the return, and that he looked to me for reimbursement. I said in perfect innocence: "Then the return will have to be amended. Where are the vouchers?" "Oh," he said, "I can't give you any vouchers; but I have spent the money, and I can tell you that, if I had not, you would not have been member for Exeter to-day." I said, "You mean, I suppose, that it was spent in bribery, against my

express instructions." He did not deny it. I was in a difficulty. Possibly I might have resigned my seat, and publicly announced the reason. On the other hand, I had no means of substantiating the statement that the money was spent, and I did not wish to do an injury to an excellent supporter by publishing what after all was only his own statement to me, and which was not likely to be corroborated by any other person. So I took no overt step. But I refused to pay the money, and have never paid it. I was conscious, however, that what I did, or rather did not do, was contrary to the accepted rule at elections, and that the non-payment of such a debt of honour (or dishonour) might cost me dearly. And I think it did. I had to face a campaign of certain influential Liberals against me, and they finally got the ear of the Liberal Federation and the Liberal Whips, who were informed that my candidature would be hopeless. I think I could have shown them the contrary if I had had a chance. But I was not rich enough to fight the seat without assistance from Liberal funds, which was naturally denied me. And I have been boycotted ever since. So much for Liberal gratitude.



## SECTION V

### PARLIAMENT

Ibi omnis  
Effusus labor.  
VIRGIL.



# I

## THE LIBERAL-LABOUR MAJORITY OF 1906

THE Parliament of 1906 was a remarkable one. I am not familiar with Parliamentary records, but I should imagine that there never has been so great a Tory *débâcle*, nor so great a Liberal majority. It was almost too large, for, naturally, after a while Liberal members were apt to think that their individual attendance would not matter, and snap divisions became a valuable asset to the Tories. Its size, moreover, caused it to be more or less a muzzled majority. According to the prevailing custom, by which speeches are made alternately from each side of the House, every Tory member had at least two or three opportunities of speaking to one accorded to the other parties in the House. Many Liberal members who desired to speak failed night after night to get an innings, even during the Committee stage of a Bill, and a man might rise twenty times or more without being called upon by the Speaker. He then usually gave up his futile attempts in disgust. That was not a satisfying position for the great mass of young Liberals who had won their seats after hard-fought fights, who had looked forward to being able to state their views in Parliament, and

who were brimming over with enthusiasm and virility.

Probably so many members absolutely new to Parliament never before entered the House at any single election, and what is still more remarkable, considering their numbers, their quality was, speaking generally, very high. They were mostly men who had distinguished themselves in some walk of life—social, commercial, literary, scientific, or in the legal profession or in the services—and were a very different class in that respect from those who have been “elected” under the so-called truce between parties, or at the recent election. The House of 1906, though in most cases selected by the Liberal and Tory wire-pullers, was at any rate, within those limits, the free choice of the people, who usually chose well. In the days of the “truce” members were not only selected but *elected* by the caucus, and their principal qualification seemed to be the possession of ample means from which to contribute to “Party” funds. The unavoidable result was that they simply represented “Party,” notwithstanding that the old domestic “Party” questions for practical purposes had ceased to exist for the time being, and never will, or can, be resuscitated to any extent on the old “Party” lines. Such elections did not represent in the smallest degree the views of the electors on the new questions arising out of the war, nor did they show the measure of confidence the people placed in the Government or their opponents, which were the only questions that really mattered. The position was unfortunate, because it admitted to, and retained in, Parliament a number of members who would have been ruthlessly rejected at a General Election, and who, as is

well known, represented in many cases only a minority of their constituents. But it was doubtless preferable to the paralysing effect of a General Election during the war.

The longer the arrangement continued, the less the body of members represented the opinion of the people generally. The recent election, at which all "Pacifists" and, indeed, all members who had incurred the slightest suspicion of "Pacifism" were rejected by great majorities, is a striking proof of the people's impatience with, and condemnation of, the method of election under the "truce." "Party" and the caucus have gone into the melting-pot, and although, unlike the 1906 Parliament, the present one may contain a large proportion of nonentities, it at all events represents the free choice of the people more completely than perhaps ever before since the institution of the caucus.

To return to the 1906 election, another, and the most remarkable, result was that it produced for the first time a Labour Party, with its own organisation and its own policy. Long before then some few Labour members had, here and there, trickled into Parliament under Liberal auspices, and at least two were included in the Liberal Government of 1892—Thomas Burt and Henry Broadhurst, both good friends of mine in after years. Henry Broadhurst I knew long before I was myself in the House; he was in the habit of coming to see me at the Education Office about schools in his constituency. I remember that once, when we were looking over the plans of a new school together, he surprised me by his knowledge of the details of the building. I said so; and



in reply he told me that he had been a workman and mason, and was therefore necessarily familiar with such details. He, like Thomas Burt, was one of the most lovable of men.

These men and a few others were the only representatives of Labour before the election of 1906. They were primarily and professedly Liberal and not Labour members, and even after that election they continued to sit on the Liberal benches. The essence of the Labour Party in Parliament after the election of 1906 was that it was homogeneous; it represented Labour only, not Liberalism. Writing as one who, during the latter part of his time in Parliament, was more in accord with Labour than with Liberalism, and who, since retiring from Parliament, completely accepts the views and principles of the moderate and loyal portion of the Labour Party, I cannot help wishing that the Labour Party may find itself before many years are past sufficiently strong in numbers, as they certainly are already in ability, to form a Government. If I am not mistaken, after the war democracy will long be increasingly in the ascendant in this country and in others, and here at least, after the long rule of aristocracy, wealth, oligarchy, and sham democracy, we need democratic changes badly enough. We need not fear extremists; our Labour men are not uneducated like the Russian peasant, nor are they anarchists, nor will they steal. But they will deal, and deal drastically, with riches that have been filched from the people, and with sweaters and oppressors; and the Government they will create will see that at last the people and the people only shall make the laws, and that the House of Lords and the Established Church—

well is to say, the legislative endowment of min- aristocracy and the special privileges of par- less or religious views—will disappear. It is high Elec- that these and many other shams were sup-

Th- d by reality. The election of 1906 was the the king on the wall, a warning to castes and peop- ironisms.

“Pa- ubs are expressed to-day, of course by interested incul- cal opponents, whether the Labour Party are, rejec- idually and collectively, fit to take up the reins the Government. Why not? I knew many of them of, or less intimately in the House, and they seemed “Pa- be much more able than the average Liberal or r- rory Minister, and quite as conversant with affairs.

Many of them, indeed, have already been among the most successful Ministers included in recent Cabinets. The Cabinet of 1905 included Mr. John Burns and Mr. Lloyd George, neither of whom had ever served in any Ministerial capacity. So far as actual administration is concerned, there would be many Labour Ministers who knew nothing of its methods; but it must be remembered that administration is in the hands of the permanent officials, and that it is not administration but policy which varies with the Government in power. There are few able men who, when placed in responsible positions, cannot rise and adapt themselves to the level of their responsibilities.

The great Liberal-Labour majority of 1906 was full of energy and vigour. Its members looked forward to the prompt realisation of the pledges they had made to their constituents and of the hopes they had cherished through more than ten years of Tory supremacy and reaction. They were grievously

disappointed. Never was a majority greater, and never was it more rapidly and recklessly dissipated. In four years, as was proved by the result of the elections of 1910, the great majority had almost disappeared. What was the reason ?

## II

### THE GOVERNMENT AND THE EDUCATION BILL OF 1906

THE normal reduction of a Parliamentary majority, whether slow or rapid, which almost invariably begins from the moment a political party enters into power, depends on the measures they introduce. That may seem a truism, but it is not so. The character of the measures may affect the *rate* of reduction, but all, whether they are good or bad, prejudice the stability of the Government introducing them. No elector (speaking generally) outside the party in power is ever converted by a good Bill, or is grateful to a Ministry for framing it. On the other hand, every Bill, good or bad, always alienates a certain number of electors, usually for personal and selfish reasons, and those electors remain alienated at least until a new Government comes into power, when the process of disintegration begins again in the new majority.

But in the case of the Liberal Government the rate of reduction, as shown by the elections of 1910, was far beyond the normal, and the reason for this may probably be assigned, in the first place, to Nonconformist and Liberal discontent with the Education Bill of 1906 and its successors; and, secondly, to the waste of Government time and the failure of the

Government to deal as speedily as was expected with matters pressing for legislation. If, *pari passu* with a short and uncompromising Education Bill, they had taken steps to abolish the veto of the House of Lords (not such as they took in a subsequent session, but much more drastic), and introduced a Home Rule Bill ; and if they had at once provided payment of members, which would have enabled many Liberal members, who were not possessed of ample means, to satisfy the demands of their constituents, the rate of disintegration would, I think, have been much slower. Possibly such a policy might have involved a fresh General Election, but I believe that the Liberal Party would have emerged from it with its strength but little diminished.

The Cabinet was formed out of Liberals of every shade of progressive opinion. There were Churchmen of various sorts, Nonconformists, and one Roman Catholic. The more prominent members of the Cabinet had not, in their public speeches while in Opposition, committed themselves more than was absolutely necessary to any drastic amendment of the Education Act of 1902. But they had declared themselves against religious tests for teachers, and in favour of *some* measure which would remedy the injustice of the Act, while the rank and file of their supporters had generally defined that remedy as not only including the abolition of religious tests for teachers, but also the complete removal of the injustice caused by the application of the rates to sectarian teaching. The Cabinet which was formed before the election, moreover, contained, with one exception—Mr. Birrell—no Member of the House of Commons who had not already a seat in Parliament.

And even Mr. Birrell was, in a sense, an old member, having sat in previous Parliaments. Certainly he had a special right to consideration, being Chairman of the National Liberal Federation, which had so successfully organised the election campaign. There was no representative in the Cabinet of the new and vigorous elements in the House which were one and all opposed to the injustice of the Education Act. They reaped no official reward for having, in many cases, borne the burden and heat of the day, though most of them who fought for and won seats knew far better than the official and sitting members what the country expected to obtain from a Liberal Government. The experience of the present day shows that not only is no harm done, but great advantages are gained, by the addition to a Cabinet of new men, not only from among those who are in Parliament for the first time, but even of some who are outside the Parliamentary fold.

The new Liberal members knew nothing and cared less about what may be termed Cabinet diplomacy, the watering down of pledges, the spinning out of a "mandate," or the weakening of measures to please opponents (always a fatal policy); they desired *action* plain, quick, and strong. They found, on the contrary, that the Government consisted almost entirely of Parliamentarians of the old school, who handled questions at issue as if they had a small and not an overwhelming majority. They were unable to get out of the old ruts, and many of them were past their best intellectually and physically.

But though the Cabinet was formed of the old Parliamentary hands, it comprised several men who had never been in a Ministry before, and who knew

little or nothing of administration and not much of legislation. The result appeared to be that in the case of several important Departments of State the Ministers in charge fell completely into the hands of the permanent officials, who were mainly Tories, which had naturally a narcotic and subduing influence.

The new Liberal members wanted quick and vigorous legislation as regarded Education, the House of Lords, the Established Church, the Poor Law, Licensing, Home Rule, Payment of Members, and so forth. The Government, on the other hand, had to consider the spreading of their mandate over the duration of a Parliament, and consequently were in no hurry. They were, however, pledged to introduce some kind of an Education Bill at the earliest possible moment, and they carried out that pledge after a fashion.

But the Bill they introduced was thoroughly bad. To those, of whom I was one, who had fought the battle of religious equality in the constituencies it was disappointing and disheartening. Many of us would have liked to have voted against the second reading. It was apparently conceived as a Bill which would disarm to some extent Tory opposition, and which might be accepted under protest by the Church of England and the Roman Catholics as a compromise. Apparently it was hoped that these religious bodies would accept it as the mildest method by which the view of the people, expressed with no doubtful voice at the General Election, might be carried into effect. But the Bill had inherent defects. It was weak, ill-considered, cumbrous, and clumsy. It even included a large section (with many clauses)

dealing with endowments, which had hardly any even remote connection with the main purpose of the measure. The reason why that section ever formed part of the Bill has always been a mystery. Probably it was inserted to please the permanent officials by meeting some difficulties of administration, on the principle that as the Bill was in any case a long one a little more or less would not matter. It had, however, eventually to be thrown overboard to lighten the ship, and the difficulties of administration, whatever they were, could not have been serious, for, so far as I know, no effort to pass any Act embodying the provisions of that section has been made from that day to this. The Bill seems to have been drafted as a compromise of various views within the Cabinet, which, as I have said, included one Roman Catholic. It seemed to indicate a hope that it might conciliate even the Lords, that most implacable of implacable bodies. It was so involved and so weak that it actually invited opposition, and it was so lengthy that legions of amendments could be moved in Committee, and it therefore gave free play to any amount of obstruction. It seemed to be a Bill which was hardly seriously intended, but designed merely to fulfil the vague promises made by Ministers when in opposition, and possibly the framers of it were under no illusion as to its prospects, even before its introduction. Its length and the inclusion in it of numerous details which were not germane to the main question at issue indicated that the usual producers of legislative complication, the Cabinet faddists, the Parliamentary draughtsmen, and the permanent officials, had had more than their proper share in the evolution of the Bill. I speak from experience, for,



in the case of important Bills, I have often seen draft after draft submitted to the Government, every successive draft enlarging the scope of the measure, lengthening and weakening it: a process which is liable to continue indefinitely unless checked by the Minister actually in charge of the framing.

The career of the Bill in both Houses was exactly what might have been anticipated. It afforded a golden opportunity to the few Tory members who had survived the general *débâcle*, and they made excellent and, of course, perfectly legitimate use of their chances. They attacked and obstructed the Bill with great ability at every stage, and were very successful in worsening it. As a result of their efforts and of the handling of the measure numerous concessions to so-called "religious" education were weakly and, most foolishly made by the Government.

Finally, when the Bill reached the House of Lords, the Archbishop of Canterbury and his supporters succeeded in destroying all vestiges of religious equality, and in turning it into a measure which utterly failed to meet the supposed purpose of its introduction or the desire of the people. When it emerged from the House of Lords it was a denominational, Anglican measure. A whole session had been wasted, the Nonconformists had been flouted, and electoral votes alienated wholesale.

It was succeeded in subsequent sessions by other equally futile Education Bills of which it need only be said that each successive Bill was worse than its predecessor.

What was really wanted then, and what is wanted now, and what we shall get as soon as greater issues have been settled, is a simple but well-considered

measure providing religious equality, probably, as I have said elsewhere, by excluding religious teaching altogether from all schools supported by public money. Such a Bill, if it had been introduced and passed in 1906, would have taken up but little of the time of the House of Commons, might have been sent up to the Lords year after year, and eventually might have been passed as soon as the Lords had been shorn of their power of continual rejection.

### III

#### IMPRESSIONS

I HAVE dealt with the Education Bills at some length, because they were specially interesting and particularly disappointing to me, who had been face to face with the so-called religious difficulty for thirty-five years in the Education Office and for three years in my political campaigning, and I knew, better perhaps than any other man, the history of religious differences in the past, and the shortcomings of the Bill which was intended to resolve them. But general legislation is outside the scope of this book, the intention of which is merely to record some of the impressions I received and some of the occurrences which took place during the time I was in Parliament.

That was the period of the principal activities of the Suffragists (then called Suffragettes), activities which have been happily set to rest, or at any rate minimised, by the new Reform Bill. The war gave the women an immense opportunity—patriotism and efficiency, both of which were splendid, took the place of violence, and removed any lingering doubts that the House of Commons, or rather the Government of the day, retained as to the propriety and desirability of extending to them the franchise. They have not yet obtained it, as they ought to, on an absolute

equality with men, but that will necessarily come in time. When I was in the House I voted for the Bill which was introduced on behalf of the women, but I confess that I did so as a matter of principle only, and that I should not have supported it in the face of further acts of violence. To-day I should be absolutely whole-hearted in supporting any measure which placed women on an equality with men, and removed all sex disabilities.

I was in the House when women chained themselves to the grille of the Ladies' Gallery, while one of their male supporters threw down leaflets from the Strangers' Gallery—one of the leaflets came into my possession and was kept by me in remembrance of the occasion. It was one of the queerest scenes ever enacted in Parliament, and it certainly did credit to the inventive powers of the ladies.

How they managed to get into the gallery on that occasion I do not know, but I fear that some of them did so on false pretences, and on the principle, with which in these days I am sure they no longer agree, that all is fair in war. But once a lady actually effected an entrance to the floor of the House in a perfectly open and legitimate manner. She had been escorted to the door of the House and permitted, as was the custom, to kneel on the bench at the side and look through the glass panels. Her conductor was a strictly law-abiding Tory member, Sir John Kennaway, the last person perhaps in all the House who would be suspected of having any dealings with a suffragist, and who doubtless knew nothing of his guest's opinions. But he happened to be called away for a moment, upon which the lady, greatly daring, jumped down from her perch, made her way through

the glass doors and began to address the House. She was, of course, immediately stopped and ejected by the attendants, but her escapade was a welcome diversion, as indeed anything was which relieved the dulness of the ordinary procedure. Happily now the doors of the House are no longer shut upon women.

A little crowd of members, of whom I was one, went out to see what they could of the famous attack of the Suffragists upon the precincts of the House. A double line of police guarded Dean's Yard at both entrances—keeping Dean's Yard itself clear. We were allowed by the police to make our way into Dean's Yard, from which point of vantage we were able to see without difficulty the encounters of the police and the Suffragists at the Victoria Street entrance. Suddenly some of the Suffragists broke through into the vacant space, and some of the crowd behind them followed. We retreated, but to our horror the police would not let us through their line by Westminster Abbey. They were not men of the A Division, but drawn, I suppose, from various localities in or about London, and none of them knew any of us. However, as we were being pushed back by the police, who apparently did not believe that we were Members of Parliament, an Inspector who understood the position arrived and rescued us from the indignity of arrest which appeared to be impending.

In those days the Suffragists used to picket the entrances to the House, in small bodies of two or three together. The object of that proceeding was and is mysterious. They did a good deal of mischief to shop windows, and indulged in many other acts of violence, which, however, did not advance but discredited their cause, and turned many of their

supporters into opponents. They thoroughly misjudged the effect, and it was not those, but quite opposite, methods which eventually have led to their obtaining not all, but a large part, of what they aimed at.

One very curious experience fell to my lot which is possibly unique. My friend Mr. Seddon and I, on arriving one afternoon, went together into the lavatory on the stairs of the members' entrance. We both took off our coats to wash our hands, and I put on mine again (as I thought), went up into the House, and sat down on one of the cross-benches. Seddon came up directly afterwards, sat down by me, and said, "I want my coat." I answered, "You've got it on, haven't you?" "No," he said, "I've got yours." "So you have," said I, after feeling in the pockets. "Let's go out and change." So we went out into the "No" lobby, to the corner near the ballot-box for the Ladies' Gallery, and proceeded to strip off our coats. I suppose we must have looked truculent or stripped them off too vigorously, for immediately up rushed an attendant, calling out, "Not here, gentlemen, not here!" I suppose he had no objection to our having a free fight somewhere else. Explanations followed.

Some funny things happened in the House shortly after the general election. On one occasion a Labour member, who has since greatly distinguished himself in the war, was speaking, and persisted, in spite of many cries of "Order" from the Tory benches, in addressing members as "gentlemen." The procedure of election meetings was apparently fresh in his memory. At last he stopped, turning round to the Tory benches, and obviously wondering why he

should be so continually called to order. Upon that Willie Redmond, wittiest of men, leaned forward from the Irish bench above, and said, very distinctly and slowly, "They are calling you to order because you called them '*gentlemen*,'" with much emphasis on the "*gentlemen*."

I heard one hon. member who was also suffering from recent electioneering, even go a bit further, and address the House as "Ladies and Gentlemen" !

## IV

### WASTE OF TIME IN PARLIAMENT

THE House of Commons is, and has always been, a most conservative institution. It is slow, very slow, to change its customs or methods of procedure. Signs are, however, not wanting that some effort may be made to bring even the House of Commons into accord with the spirit of progress which permeates society to-day, and has been so greatly vivified by the war and its effects.

No attempt, however, has yet been made to limit the length of speeches, and but little to limit the length of debates, yet the business of the House has enormously increased with the extension of trade and commerce, the growth of population, the multiplication of interests, and the responsibilities of a rapidly growing Empire, to say nothing of the new and numerous questions that are the aftermath of the war. The waste of time is prodigious.

The House, so far as legislation is concerned, has become a machine for passing Government measures only. The legislative privileges of private members have been practically extinguished, and though every member has a right to introduce a Bill, that right has become a mere sham, for such a Bill hardly ever passes into law.



At the beginning of each session some two <sup>that</sup> three hundred Bills or more are introduced by private members. Many of them are excellent in interest and framed with the object of remedying grievance or putting an end to anomalies or anachronisms results greatly to be desired. Only about a <sup>of</sup> of these stand any chance whatever of getting a second reading or being even debated, and the <sup>her</sup> others do not consist of the most important or of select Bills, but of those whose introducers have been lucky in balloting for the use of a morning sitting on a Friday before Whitsuntide, such Fridays being the only days assigned to any but Government Bills. The Bills actually debated may be consequently mere rubbish.

If a member secures an early place in the ballot he obtains a debate. But even if his Bill is not rejected, he is by no means sure of getting a second reading for it. Its opponents are sure to endeavour to "talk it out," and the closure may not be accepted by the Speaker, if he considers that the Bill is one which cannot be fully debated during the five hours available, or which ought to have been introduced, if at all, by the Government.

Supposing, however, the Bill survives these perils and is read a second time. It is referred to a Grand Committee, which considers it line by line, and spends considerable pains and time upon the work. Then it goes back to the House for the Report stage and third reading. But as only two or three days after Whitsuntide can be allotted for these stages, only two or three Bills can be considered on Report, and practically none ever get a third reading, unless the Government give some of what is called "Govern-

time" for it, which can rarely be spared. Then, if the third reading is carried, the pitfalls of the House of Lords remain. Almost the only notorious Bill that I remember passing into law was the so-called "Deceased Wife's Sister Bill," and it passed the Commons only after an all-night sitting in Committee of the whole House. The net result of all this procedure is that the whole of the five days before Whitsuntide, and two or three after, are absolutely wasted time.

The time devoted to discussion of resolutions moved by private members—usually the evenings (after 8.15) of Wednesdays and Thursdays before Whitsuntide—is also generally wasted. As in the case of Bills, the order in which resolutions are moved depends on the fortune of the ballot. Their only use is that they may, if on important subjects, indicate to the Government the opinion of the House with sufficient force to justify the introduction of a Bill to give effect to it, but that is rarely the case.

But the principal waste of time is in connection with Government Bills. Some are of no great importance and are passed without difficulty, after reference to Grand Committees. But the principal window-dressing Bill or Bills of the session usually consume an amount of time largely in excess of what their merits deserve.

The Bills themselves are generally about twice as long as they should be. I have already mentioned the Education Bill as typical of the procedure. In framing an important Bill a Minister finds himself dominated by three sorts of people, whose efforts are always in the direction of making his Bill complicated and unwieldy. The Minister drafts a few

heads and puts them in the hands of the Parliamentary draughtsman, who amplifies and expands them according to his legal taste and fancy. Then come in the criticisms of the permanent official, and finally the views of the faddists in the Cabinet. The child grows so prodigious that, when it is finally dressed for exhibition, the Minister hardly knows his own child or what it all means. From a comparatively simple measure has been evolved a complicated piece of legal phraseology of portentous length, every line of which affords an opportunity to the Opposition for obstruction and delay. There is, or was in my time, hardly any long measure which could not have been shortened or divided without any diminution of effect. The great length of most contentious measures has, moreover, necessitated procedures called "closure by compartments" and "the kangaroo closure," which appear to be most objectionable, inasmuch as they avoid debate on some—it may be considerable and important—parts of a Bill.

The introduction of the closure has not been sufficiently effectual in limiting debate or checking repetition. The closure cannot be used at all in connection with the Budget or the Finance Bill, which are responsible for an enormous waste of time. Consequently all the arguments for or against a particular tax or duty are repeated and discussed *ad infinitum*. The Chancellor of the Exchequer explains his proposals in a speech of inordinate length, and they are duly debated. Then follow resolutions approving the taxes and duties separately, then the second reading, then Committee of the whole House, then the Report stage (which is a duplicate of the Committee stage), and then the

third reading. At every one of these stages the same subject-matter is discussed over and over again, the same arguments are used, opposition is renewed to what has been already passed, and the power of obstruction can be used without stint or limit.

One effect of the waste of time under the existing rules is that much really useful discussion is prevented. "Supply"—*i.e.* the discussion of the Estimates for carrying on the Army, Navy, and Civil Service during the financial year—receives much less than its proper share of Parliamentary time. There are a large number of so-called "Votes" under various heads to be laid before Parliament for discussion. Not, I should think, anything like half of them practically come before Parliament at all. Those that do come up for debate are talked about at interminable length and with endless repetition. The rest are not discussed at all, but, on the last of the days allotted to Supply during the session, are simply moved by the Government and opposed by the Opposition, and hours are usually spent in the futile proceeding of marching through the division lobbies. Under such circumstances the technical control of public money by Parliament becomes a mere farce.

The arrangements for divisions also involve an excessive amount of time, especially when the minority is exceptionally small and the majority large in number. In the Parliaments of other countries, I believe, each deputy has a desk of his own, and by touching a button on it indicates his vote, instead of passing through a division lobby. Here, however, there is not anything like sufficient space to provide a seat for each member, and therefore such a procedure is impracticable. It would

surely, however, not be beyond the wit of man to devise some arrangement by which members could vote without leaving the chamber and have their votes recorded by some automatic process.

It is quite certain that, however drastic may be the improvements made in procedure, the real remedy lies in the devolution by Imperial Parliament of its duties in a much greater degree than at present to auxiliary Parliaments representing England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, while Imperial Parliament preserves its privilege of sanctioning or vetoing legislation proposed or passed by those bodies. The details of the Parliamentary business of the British Isles and of the Empire have grown too large to be dealt with by a single chamber, and the result is that bureaucracy practically usurps the power of Parliament.

## V

### MEMBERS AND MONEY

THERE are many ways in which lack of wealth affects a member's comfort in his work, usefulness in the House, and position in what I may call, with a big S, the Society of Parliament, if he happens to belong to either of the two principal parties. In the first place, he must be able to pay a private secretary, the employment of whom is a *sine qua non*, if the member expects to spend much time in the Chamber itself or on Committee, or to have any sufficient leisure for attending to his private affairs. For a man who has no private secretary the work is often extremely hard. I generally, for instance, as I had to go some distance by train after the House was "up," did not get to bed before half-past one on the first four days of the week. In the morning there was often a Committee to attend, then a short time for lunch, then question time, and then, as Pepys would have said, to the post office to get letters. For lack of a private secretary these letters, which were often very numerous, had to be answered personally, and the result was that, from four o'clock or earlier, until dinner time, there was no respite from constant pen-scratching, unless a short time could be filched from it for tea.

Facts and details in connection with any Bill of importance had to be got up at odd times, usually after dinner. It was altogether a most laborious business; in short, mere slavery. There were complications also in this routine. Single constituents, or parties of constituents and other people, or persons who wished to obtain a vote for some Bill in which they were interested, or to get an order for the Strangers' or the Ladies' Gallery, provided interludes which were pleasant enough, but not conducive to the despatch of necessary duties.

It was the custom on those days, before such a person as the Food Controller existed, for numerous dinner parties to be given at the House in honour of some Minister, member, or outsider, and the member who could not afford these entertainments was rather "out of the best (because wealthiest) parliamentary society, and his chances of place and power and titles were greatly lessened.

There were numerous subscriptions also to associations and various propaganda which it was desirable to pay if a member wished to keep his activities prominently before the public and the Government.

On the other hand, the ordinary society of Parliament is not affected by money or the want of it, and is second to none in the world. It has been said that the House of Commons is the best club in London. In my humble opinion no club can approach it so far as social intercourse is concerned. There is a freedom, and there is an education and variety that no club provides. In the House itself, in the smoking-rooms, dining-rooms, and, above all, in the tea-room, a man constantly makes new friends and acquaintances, irrespective of politics, and there is none of that shy-

ness or stand-offishness which prevents two Englishmen sitting in a club or railway carriage from speaking to each other.

Whatever, moreover, the feeding arrangements may be to-day, they used to be extremely cheap, and a decent dinner could be got for a shilling ; and as for drinking facilities—well, I was a teetotaller in those days, but so cheap were the various intoxicants that I have heard it said by ribald members that nowhere was it so easy to get intoxicated—or on such good liquor or for so little money—as in the dining-rooms of the House of Commons. But it was extremely seldom that the opportunity was acted upon, for I do not remember, during all the years that I attended the House either as an official or as a member, more than two instances of men attending who had obviously indulged in excessive potations, and I think in both instances they had dined elsewhere than in the House.





SECTION VI  
SUPPLEMENTARY

*Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque,*  
*Nulla fuit cuius non meminisse vellet.*—MARTIAL



# I

## HONESTY

So far as I have dealt with dates and occurrences I may perhaps offer, as some excuse for any trifling errors that may have been overlooked, the fact that this book has been written entirely from memory without the aid of diary or notes.

It is possible that some of my readers may be disposed to think that the criticisms of various social, political, and administrative absurdities are stronger than they deserve. But I stand by all that I have written without reservation, and my only doubt is whether, in my desire not to offend susceptibilities, I have not toned down my language too severely and failed to convey with sufficient force the impressions I have received during a long official and public life ; much of it spent, so to speak, behind the scenes. I may claim, at any rate, that all that has been set down is absolutely honest. I have no axe to grind ; and, indeed, if I had one it would be extremely unlikely to get an edge on such a whetstone. Selfish interests are to-day less served by plain speaking than ever before, jobbing is more rampant, toadyism is more unblushing, and public life more degraded. So far, reconstruction has not lifted us out of the mire.

Much of what I have written is ancient history, but the lessons of the past are not inapplicable to present conditions. The scandals of yesterday are indeed (*mutatis mutandis*) in fuller force to-day. The present is a period of exceptional, even marvellous, inefficiency in administration. The Government exists, not on its achievements or on the inherent strength of the men who constitute it, but on concealment, evasion, and political dishonesty, which it has made into fine arts—I admit with considerable success.

There is of course nothing new about their methods; they have always been in vogue, more or less, and in normal times the mischief they did was, if not negligible, yet not of great account. But to-day it is pitiable to see scandal after scandal exposed by the Press and attempted to be “explained” by the Government. What we need to-day are men who without outside pressure will go straight at the work of cleaning out the Augean stable which has been the legacy of the war.

The evil traditions of the past are still full of vitality. Judging by my official and parliamentary experiences I know that honesty never “paid” in normal times either in the Civil Service or in Parliament—that is, if a man had ambitions. In the Civil Service the chief factor of success was the brazen adoption of the opinions of other people (Ministers and people that mattered), and in Parliament it was opportunism, clever disloyalty, and an accurate judgment, not of right and wrong, but of what might have been expedient for the time being. “Politics,” once said a Cabinet Minister to me, “is a dirty game.” It is one, at any rate, in which a man

if he desires to succeed must have no compunction in throwing over his friends or kicking down those on whose shoulders he has mounted, if such proceedings are in the interest of himself or his party.

Electioneering may, perhaps, provide an exception. There, possibly, honesty pays in the long run. The ordinary elector likes a man to say what he thinks straight out, without cooking his views to suit his audience. But permanent officials, if they want to curry favour, must do a deal of cooking to please their Parliamentary Chiefs, and a member of Parliament must be ready to swallow anything for his party. Moreover, a power to humbug effectively the public is a great asset both to a Minister and an ordinary member of Parliament.

I remember that in the time of my predecessor, Patrick Cumin, at the Education Office, he and Mundella, who was then Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, were once discussing what was to be said to a deputation which was expected to present a good case and to be difficult to appease, and Mundella vehemently declared that it was absolutely impossible for him to concede anything. But when the deputation arrived he gave them a sample of his very best wind-bag oratory and a world of sympathy, and they marched off under the impression that they were going to get everything they wanted. Cumin said, "How you did humbug them!" "Yes," said Mundella in his fine open-mouthed style, "we are all humbugs, you know; that is part of our stock in trade." That I suppose is truer to-day than ever it was, and in his turn the permanent official must humbug his Parliamentary Chief, or, if he does not, must look out for squalls.

He must learn to thicken his skin and his conscience. But, unfortunately for myself, many years of officialism did not cure me of a habit of honestly speaking my mind, and I suffered for it accordingly at the hands of Balfour and his incapable Government, who, I should think, were about the last persons in the world to give any honest official any credit for his honesty.

## II

### HONOURS

IN an article, which is reprinted in the Appendix, I had something to say on the scandalous sale of civil "Honours" before the war. At that time it was bad enough. But during and after the war Peerages, Baronetcies, and Knighthoods have been turned out like endless ribbons from a conjurer's hat, the principal qualification being, apparently, simply that the recipient was wealthy and able to pay the price. The secret party funds must have been swollen as never before, and for that reason an account of them is now less than ever likely to be published. Some "Honours" have, of course, been merited by public service, some have been given for reasons of nepotism or personal friendship (there are plenty of instances of these latter), but the great majority had money credentials, in many cases obtained by profiteering at the expense of the taxpayers or by defrauding workers of their due wage. The country is swamped by titles, and the House of Lords by nonentities, placed there curiously enough by either a Liberal or a Coalition (Liberal Conservative) Government. It is not so long ago that hereditary titles were abhorrent to a large section of the Liberal party,



but nowadays Liberals are not a yard behind Tories in the hunt for titles.

As for the "Honours" of a minor kind, the stream appears to be inexhaustible. They are, of course, unbought and largely undeserved. They are mainly the output of jobbery. Any man or woman who has an influential friend in the Government and who can produce some ostensible reason for a claim can have one of these. The Mint of Honour turns them out wholesale, to be scrambled for like the pancake at Westminster. M.B.E.'s, C.B.E.'s, and O.B.E.'s swarm like bees from the Government hive. The consequence is that the better classes of the community regard them with undisguised contempt, and they have become a laughing-stock. The wonder is that they are not refused. Perhaps some are. But many people of the class that receive them are dazzled by the prospect of flaunting two or three letters after their names, and by anticipation of an investiture by Royalty, ignorant of the fact that these "Honours" are really conferred not by the King, but by the Prime Minister, or rather by his henchmen. Truly in the human heart snobbery has a big niche.

I am not speaking, of course, of military or naval decorations. I am speaking of those men and women who remained at home in safety, and who in many cases profited financially, while others risked their health, limbs, and lives. Military and naval honours, considering the marvellous courage and tenacity of our soldiers and sailors, and the devotion of those women who, in the capacity of nurses and other auxiliaries, incurred the dangers of active service, can hardly be too numerous. I believe that it would be only right that a special pension should be attached to

every one of these decorations. Some compensation would in that way be given to those who were debarred by the exigencies of their service from receipt of the increased and extravagant wages and bonus given to those who worked at home.

Nor am I speaking of the better classes of Orders, that is to say, those which existed long before the Order of the British Empire and its lavish use were born or thought of. The older Orders are not free from occasional jobbing and nepotism, but they are rarely, if ever, bought, and are in great measure non-political. The mischief of "Honours" is wrought by "Party" politics, and the necessity, under the present system, of obtaining "Party" funds, with which to bribe the constituencies. It may be noted that the donors of such "Honours" take uncommonly good care not to annex any themselves.

There is much that might be done to cope with the evil, if only Parliament were not so completely enslaved to "Party" and vote-catching, and if it would assert its independence and its determination that merit, and merit alone, should be considered in the awards.

In the first place, it is essential that an Act should be passed compelling the publication of all accounts of "Party" funds, that is to say, of all moneys obtained and used by any association of persons for the purpose of promoting the election of Parliamentary candidates either by propaganda in the constituencies or by direct financial assistance, and all such accounts should be duly audited.

Secondly, in every case the reason for the bestowal of the "Honour" should be explicitly and fully stated, not as at present in a few words which might

cover any amount of secret jobbery, but in sufficient detail for the public to be able to judge whether the award is justifiable on the ground of merit alone. If such a rule did not altogether exclude jobbery it would at least scotch it.

Thirdly, unless Parliament ordered otherwise, there should be a limit of the number of persons in the enjoyment of "Honours" in each class, and a further limit of the number of awards permitted in each year.

Fourthly, no fresh Order or class of "Honours" should be established without the sanction of Parliament.

Fifthly, a tax should be imposed on all persons using hereditary or "courtesy" titles, just as a tax is now levied on persons using armorial bearings, and the tax should be graduated according to "rank."

The "Party" system has been so dependent on the award of "Honours" for its financial maintenance, and therefore for its very existence, that the present practice has been fortified by long years of tradition, is supported by the office-seekers and hardened politicians of all parties, and has come to be regarded by the general public as a necessary evil inherent in the constitution. Few people care to trouble themselves about it. But nevertheless it is a growing canker at the root of efficient government.

What guarantee is there at present that even seats in the House of Commons are not allotted (for in the majority of cases they are practically *allotted*) by the Whips to those men who have subscribed most largely for party purposes? There is every reason, at any rate, to suppose that such was the case during the war while the "party truce" was

in force, and the party associations and not the voters elected the members.

The House of Lords is, of course, more directly affected. Not the ablest, but the richest men are selected for membership of that assembly. But there is surely no case for creating a legislator except on grounds of ability and merit. If that were the rule, even under existing conditions the House of Lords would benefit, for it would be strengthened by the admission of the first holder of the peerage, whatever might be said for his successors. When the House of Lords ceases to be hereditary, as it doubtless will cease in the fulness of time under the pressure of democracy, the people must see to it that, whatever shape the reform of that House may take, no opening is left for corruption in the method of its constitution. If hereditary peerages are still created, they will be shorn of their present privileges, and the award of their dignities will fall under the general rules governing the distribution of "Honours." Even if peerages were to continue to be sold, they would then be pretty nearly as cheap as baronetcies, and the holders, like baronets, could do no mischief.

### III

## UNPOPULAR CAUSES

### ANTI-VIVISECTION

I HAVE never been afraid of advocating unpopular causes openly and without reserve. Every man, however, who ventures on such a course always suffers in the present, whatever may be his fate in the future. He may be a pioneer, or he may be making a stand against some ebullition of popular fury or enthusiasm. It does not matter, he pays ; he will be carried upon the rocks, and he will suffer immediately either in pocket or reputation or position. The majority who differ from him have a rich assortment of names for him—he is crazy, a faddist, a visionary, a crank, or a fool. Such names go a long way with the public. And people like to feel that they are on the winning side. •

Probably the most unpopular cause I ever handled was that of Anti-vivisection. There are few among us, I hope, who would support vivisection and its awful cruelties on any other ground than that the practice of it and the results obtained from it make —for the prolongation of human life, or the cure or prevention of disease. That they do so is the plea of the practitioners. The general public never investigate the premises, but they accept the conclusion

presented to them by those persons, who are, of course, deeply interested witnesses. The great majority of mankind are therefore ready to shut their eyes to the agonies inflicted upon tens of thousands of animals, in the hope and expectation that something will some day or other be evolved from those sufferings which may give a longer lease to human life.

For many years I have been a convinced and active opponent of these hideous practices. I was for some years Chairman of the Battersea Anti-vivisection Hospital, which certainly was not less efficient than any other hospital, though, through the opposition and, I may almost say, the persecution of the majority of the medical profession, it was constantly deprived of a share in various hospital funds, from which other hospitals obtained grants in full measure. I was President of the great meeting of the World's League against Vivisection, organised by Miss Lindaf-Hageby, and I was a member of Anti-vivisection societies. I gave evidence for Miss Lindaf-Hageby in her action against Dr. Saleeby, and I have spoken in support of Anti-vivisection at numerous meetings.

It has always appeared to me that money lies at the root of the support given by the majority of the medical profession to the pseudo-research, which consists in cutting up unfortunate and helpless animals. There are, however, happily, a considerable minority of that profession who hold that a very small, if any, benefit to man has been obtained from the torture of the many thousands of animals that have come under the knife of vivisectionists. They hold, moreover, that any such benefit (if any) has been more than compensated by the misleading character of the results. But the emoluments attached

to the practice of so-called "research" are very large, and in addition the fame (and consequent money) to be gained by the discovery, real or pretended, of some anti-toxin or alleged preventive of disease is naturally attractive. The great majority of mankind are ready to acclaim, without inquiry, any man who offers them even a remote chance of freedom from disease, whatever the price to be paid may be, and however meagre may be the grounds on which the offer is based.

In some cases the failures of the vivisectors are obvious and, I believe, admitted. They have failed, for instance, to discover any preventive of, or anti-toxin for, typhus fever. In my youth I constantly heard of some outbreak of typhus in villages near my home. Yet typhus fever has now practically disappeared from this country. Why? Because typhus is a dirt disease, and can only flourish under insanitary conditions. Sanitation has killed it. It may still be found, raging and virulent, in Russian prisons and camps, and, indeed, wherever men and women are herded together hungry, filthy, and miserable. Nor, so far as I am aware, has any claim been made to the discovery of an anti-toxin in the case of measles or scarlet fever or whooping-cough.

Tens of thousands of animals have been tortured in the attempt to find a remedy for tuberculosis. But judging by the toll that tuberculosis takes of human life every year, no effective preventive or cure has yet been discovered.

- The Dogs' Protection Bill was recently thrown out in the House of Commons. It proposed to exempt dogs absolutely from vivisection. Had the Bill been carried the vivisectors would still have had at their

mercy all the other animals, monkeys, guinea-pigs, mice, etc.—which they “use” in enormous numbers. But they could not even concede immunity to dogs, though, being nearer to man in intelligence than other animals and far superior to him in loyalty and affection, they stand in a different category from the rest of the subjects of the vivisectors. The methods or rather *dodges* used to defeat the Bill were extremely clever. The real or supposed outbreak of rabies in various parts of the country was exploited to the utmost to prejudice the people generally, and the House of Commons especially, against dogs. Until the Bill was first emasculated in Standing Committee, and afterwards defeated in the House on its third reading, the rabies outbreak was the subject of almost daily paragraphs in every newspaper, containing records of “suspected” or “confirmed” cases. But from the moment that the exploitation ceased to be of value to vivisection those paragraphs ceased and nothing has been heard of the rabies outbreak, except now and again a stray reference in some obscure corner of a newspaper. Inasmuch as, at the date at which I am writing, no case of hydrophobia has been reported, though numbers of persons have been bitten by “confirmed” mad dogs; it seems extremely doubtful whether the disease is true rabies at all. It is also doubtful whether the procedure of the Board of Agriculture in cases of rabies is such as to command confidence. If I am not mistaken, the rule in vogue with the Board is as follows: Every reported case is a “suspected” case, the examination is made by a veterinary surgeon on the spot, but the “confirmation” is provided by the Board of Agriculture themselves, presumably on the report of



the veterinary surgeon. It is quite obvious that, as every veterinary surgeon's knowledge of rabies and its symptoms must necessary be extremely limited (and, for that matter, that of the Board also), not only may there be numbers of errors in the diagnosis, but the "confirmed" cases may be multiplied or decreased according as the rules for diagnosis are varied.

Some day, I presume, a truer civilisation and a better religion will bring an era of mercy, not only to dogs but to all living animals. There will be a greater appreciation of their position in creation, cruelty will cease to be legal, and will be treated as a crime, and the whole practice of vivisection will be blown into the air.

But for the time being the pseudo-scientists hold the field—and their emoluments.

## IV

### UNPOPULAR CAUSES

#### VACCINATION

THE practice of vaccination stands upon a different footing from some other kinds of inoculations, for it was not inaugurated by vivisection, and I am not desirous here of entering upon the vexed controversy whether it is or is not a preventive of smallpox.

But it is at anyrate extremely questionable whether the vaccine matter obtained from the calf at the present day has not, through many years of infection from child to child, and animal to animal, acquired new characteristics, or lost some at least of its prophylactic efficacy. It is true that smallpox has, to all intents and purposes, died out, and the sporadic cases that occur show no increase year by year. But unquestionably it is, like typhus, a dirt disease, and it exhibits energy only in insanitary surroundings. When cases appear in this country, the fear of the people naturally gives a stimulus to vaccination, but the disease is fought by isolation of the patient and disinfection. It does not appear to spread specially among the unvaccinated. In Leicester, in which town practically all the population are unvaccinated, there was an outbreak, but it was promptly stamped out.

Even, however, if we assume that the virulence of smallpox may be modified, and a degree of immunity secured by vaccination, we may well inquire whether under present conditions the game is worth the candle, especially in the case of infants. Judging by my own experience, a very considerable child mortality is caused by infant vaccination. Since the passing of the last Vaccination Act I have, as a magistrate, granted exemption for large numbers of infants, I suppose some hundreds. I have asked nearly every applicant why he desired exemption. In a small minority of cases the parent, though he *said* that he conscientiously believed that his child's general health would suffer, was obviously also influenced by the selfish motive that the child would be troublesome, that its crying would disturb his rest, and so forth. But in the great majority of cases the man said that either one of his own children or one of those of some neighbour or acquaintance had died of vaccination. The usual description was that the child had become covered with sores, and finally wasted away. In other cases, where some of a family had been vaccinated and others exempted, the parent said that the vaccinated children were stunted in growth and delicate, in comparison with the unvaccinated. In one case that I remember, a man said that he came for exemption because three of his children had died from vaccination. I asked him why, if so, he had not claimed exemption before. He answered that he was a gipsy, had had no education and could not read, and so did not know what the "paper" (the exemption form) contained. On another occasion the coachman of the public vaccinator for the district came to me. I asked him, as was my custom,

his reason for desiring exemption. He said "he knew a good deal too much about it"; that he had constantly to drive his master on a vaccination "round"; that they might take out (say) ten or twelve tubes of lymph; that most of the tubes seemed all right and the children vaccinated with them did well, but that a small proportion of the tubes seemed to produce horrible skin diseases. He did not want his child to run the risk.

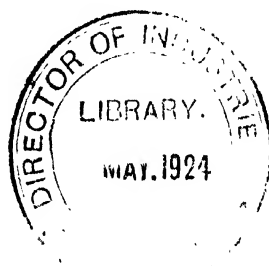
I am afraid that again, in this connection, I must refer to what I may call the money motive—I am far from suggesting that any medical man would support a practice which he knew to be injurious or ineffective on account of the money gain. I do not doubt that doctors who practise vaccination honestly believe in its efficacy. But public vaccinators are, as a body, by no means rich, and their belief is not likely to be modified by the fact that compulsory vaccination is a very valuable material asset to them. I should be interested to know how many deaths of children, according to the returns of the Registrar-General, are annually attributed to vaccination or to skin diseases arising from it, and I should be very much surprised to find that the number corresponds with the facts stated in this chapter, or, indeed, that any deaths from vaccination are recorded. Such deaths would probably be attributed to skin diseases, as indeed, in a sense, is the fact.

We all know the danger arising from vaccination from child to child, which the use of calf-lymph was intended to avoid. But in the opinion of some medical men the result has been simply the substitution of one danger for another. Cattle are commonly subject to tuberculosis, and it has been proved that

it is communicable from cattle to human beings. It is very doubtful whether tuberculosis in cattle can be detected without a post-mortem examination, though I believe that a method of diagnosis of its presence in the living animal has recently been devised. However that may be, it is obviously impossible that there can be any absolute guarantee that the disease, in possibly an incipient stage, is not present in the calf from which the lymph is supplied, or was not present in one or other of the series of calves through which the infection was handed down from one to another. I am aware that, as far as possible, the calf actually providing the lymph is tested. But the question is whether the test can be perfect, and whether, in the long series of infected calves, it is possible, considering the wide prevalence of tuberculosis in cattle, to have avoided, at some period or other, making use of a calf in which were present undiscovered germs of tuberculous disease. Hence the danger that by means of the lymph, tuberculosis may be communicated to the vaccinated child, and that, even assuming that vaccination is still a preventive of smallpox, we have merely evaded Scylla in order to fall into Charybdis.

I may add that there is at least one practice connected with the use of calf-lymph which surely ought to be prohibited by law. The calves, after inoculation, are in certain parts of their bodies a mere mass of disease, cow-pox, or cow-smallpox, or whatever it may be. After the lymph has been drawn off they are examined and if certified to be free from disease are sold to butchers and used for human food, according to an answer given by Mr. Burns, when

President of the Local Government Board, to Mr. Charles Duncan in the House of Commons. A more disgusting proceeding can hardly be imagined, for however free these animals may be from other diseases, they must be absolutely permeated with the germs of the disease with which they have been inoculated. I commend this matter to the attention of Parliament.



## V

### EDUCATION TO-DAY

#### LEGISLATION

THE war has made no difference in kind to the needs of education. But it has made their satisfaction more urgent. If, in spite of the enormous burdens imposed upon the people (and not in this country alone) civilisation is able, in the days of the new generation, to present an impenetrable barrier to the battering-ram of ignorance and anarchy, education will be a main, perhaps the principal, factor in the result. There must be no stop or stay in the perfecting, so far as our present knowledge permits, of the system under which the mass of the people on whom the future of the nation rests are educated.

Let us see how we stand. I much fear that there is already some reaction from the general assent given, both by Parliament and the public, to the Act of 1918. The cry to-day is for economy, and the provisions of the Act, when fully carried out, will be exceedingly costly. These provisions are, moreover, beset with difficulties which in some cases will postpone their complete fulfilment for many years, during which there is not likely to be less drain on the resources of the State. The chief difficulty is and will be (as it has always been) the large additional

cost imposed upon the taxpayers and ratepayers. The Act of 1918 provides for nursery schools, and for continuation schools, which are the necessary complements to our present system before the education at the public elementary school begins and after it ends. It also provides for the establishment of schools of various types, industrial, commercial, and so forth. The criticism I would make on the Act is that it tries to do too much at once, and has set out to conquer a kingdom without the means of even taking a province. It is an indication of the lines on which our advance should proceed, but for that matter those lines were known many years ago, though no Government dared to suggest such innovations as they entailed, in the days when we were only extravagant in strict moderation. We have now got the skeleton, but I fear that to cover it with flesh, now that the country is realising its true financial position, will be just as difficult as it would have been thirty years ago. And it must be remembered that it is not only the taxpayers, but the ratepayers also, upon whom the pressure will fall, and that already the rates have risen to an unprecedented height. We cannot expect people who have already been hard hit by the war, to impoverish themselves further, even for education, without protest.

- At the present time, for the reason I have given, and others closely connected with it, the new venture of 1918 has made little progress. The Act provided for *compulsory* continuation schools free of payment of fees. There are none. Nor will there be for years. The act is, however, being used as a lever to cause local authorities to provide *voluntary* continuation schools — with limited success. In this case the



cart has been put before the horse. If the Minister of Education had studied the history of education from 1870 for about fifteen years, he would have found that the method pursued by all Governments of those days in educational legislation was first to pass an enabling Act, and subsequently when that had taken good root in the country, to make its provisions compulsory. If he had now simply encouraged and pressed the setting up of voluntary continuation schools, which subsequently could have been made compulsory everywhere, he would not have been driven as he has been to defer compulsion and rely upon voluntaryism. For the time being it is hopeless to attempt to establish a complete system of continuation schools—local authorities could not face the ratepayers, and there are practically no teachers available. But I will discuss the general question of the supply of teachers later.

Summarising: I may say that the chief merit of the Act of 1918, so far as nursery, continuation, and special schools are concerned, is not that it has produced anything new, but that it has translated the ideals of the past into more or less practical politics. As they now stand upon the Statute Book, it may be hoped that here and there local authorities, no doubt very gradually and sporadically at first, will see their way to set an example of patriotism. In the, perhaps distant, future this Act will go far to make a new and better society. But the time is not yet.

Nursery schools are in the same predicament, though perhaps in a lesser degree. So are the proposed special types of schools. So far as a Government grant for these types is concerned the House of Commons might be induced to vote it,

as the special types of schools would be popular and comparatively few, but whether the ratepayers would pay their share without serious protest is exceedingly doubtful.

But there is at least one provision in the Act which may be brought into full operation at once by a short amendment of the Act of 1918—*i.e.* the abolition of half-time labour of children. It does not depend upon public money. For thirty years all persons who have had education at heart have desired to see half-time employment of children prohibited. But the politicians and party politics have blocked the way. Party leaders have been desperately afraid of losing seats if they deprived the parents of the pittances paid to their unfortunate children.

An amendment to the Act of 1918, unhappily accepted by the Government, probably because a general election was impending at the time, deferred the appointed day for the abolition until after the termination of the war. That means a postponement for many months or longer, thanks to Turkey and the United States of America. Nor is there any guarantee that half-time labour will come to an end even then. It depends whether a general election is then likely to take place in the near future and if the Government happen to be losing seats. At such times abuses are always maintained, if maintenance is desirable or necessary *qua* electioneering.

The whole country is opposed to half-time labour, except those districts in which it is prevalent. But where it is not prevalent its abolition would not gain a vote; where it is, votes would be lost. So the children continue to suffer at the hands of the politicians.

We hear that there is an enormous demand for

secondary education. That is well, for it shows that those people who have profited by the war are alive to the advantages of obtaining a better education for their children. I do not, however, see, as I have said in a former chapter, why those parents who can pay the whole cost of their children's secondary education should not do so, or why public money should be applied to secondary schools in any other way than the provision of scholarships for those who cannot pay. I do not mean that less money, but that probably more money, should be expended in grants. But it should be expended so as to help the children coming from the elementary schools to go forward. It is, however, encouraging to find that the Board of Education have recently taken a step in the right direction by providing "maintenance" grants under certain conditions for necessitous children. The grants are small and tentative, but they are at least a beginning, and in these days of economy we must be duly thankful for small mercies. But the number of free places in secondary schools reserved for children from the elementary schools, i.e. 25 per cent of the whole, is absurd. It is ludicrously out of proportion to the numbers of working-class and middle-class children respectively. It goes a very short distance in the process of culling and cultivating the cleverest children of the elementary schools. Let us employ our money to the best advantage by breaking down the poverty bar, not in helping all children in secondary schools indiscriminately, or by trying to level up mediocrities and dullards with scholars who are really worthy of State effort for their advancement. That is an almost criminal waste of money.

I venture to say a word in conclusion on a matter which, though strictly speaking one for administration, is, perhaps, more pressing, essential, and far-reaching than any legislation. I hope that a strong effort will be made by the Board of Education, in connection with the curricula enforced in schools of every description, elementary and secondary alike, to break down British prejudice against foreign nations and foreigners, and to make the scholars realise that there are other great civilised countries and nationalities in the world besides their own. Prejudices die hard, though no doubt the war and its alliances have done something to remove them. But the future of the League of Nations, on which not only the peace but the progress of the civilised world depends, rests not so much with the present as with the new generation, the children who are now in the schools. Teach them by all means the greatness of Britain, but not at the expense of other nationalities. Show them how the nations are interdependent in production, industry, and commerce, and how their interests are, in great degree, inseparable. The more nearly the nations can be blended into one harmonious whole, the better it will be for all. This, to my mind, is the ultimate mission of the League of Nations, the hope of the world.

Let us not neglect the aid to its success which may be given, in no small measure, by our schools.

## VI

### EDUCATION TO-DAY

#### TEACHERS

BEFORE, however, launching out into new adventures, it is just as well that we should take the necessary steps to keep what we have. And our present possessions are in peril. More than ever before we need teachers, efficient, trained, and numerous, both for elementary and secondary schools. Are we likely to get them under present conditions ?

The numbers of the teachers were terribly depleted by the war. That superb patriotism which pervaded all classes, appealed perhaps most strongly to the cultured, and as a consequence many thousands of teachers joined the colours early in the war, and thousands have fallen. Many also have been permanently alienated from the profession by the greater freedom, the more vigorous life, and better prospects offered by other vocations. Who can blame them if, after experiencing the strenuous energies and vivid attractions of an open-air life, many of them decline to return to the desk ? The problem is how to supply this special wastage as well as the normal wastage, and how to provide for the developments intended by the Act of 1918. Never before was there so great a demand for new teachers, yet never

was there so poor a prospect of obtaining even the number necessary for existing schools and normal supply. It seems as if almost everywhere local authorities will be compelled to fill up their schools with unqualified teachers, to the great detriment of the children. The lack of teachers constitutes a real peril to education. And how about future developments? Thirty thousand *additional* teachers are required for continuation schools. What hope is there of obtaining them under present conditions?

The fact is that the profession is not sufficiently attractive. It is very largely a question of money, and in a lesser degree that of the status of the teachers, which indeed is much the same thing. It is true that the salaries have been considerably increased so far as face value is concerned. But their purchasing power does not greatly, if at all, exceed what it was before the present inflation of values. In these pushful days, the prospect of a quiet humdrum existence on strictly limited means does not appeal even to the ordinary man or woman.

The Board of Education have issued circulars, admirable as pieces of academic verbiage, but likely to prove quite ineffective, pointing out the sources from which supplies of teachers can be obtained, and the advantages of the teacher's calling. But, says the old adage, "fine words butter no parsnips." What is the State going to offer to the highly educated man or woman, sufficient to induce them to sacrifice once for all their ambitions and their liberty, and to devote the whole of their lives to a service which involves more or less segregation from the active world, lack of variety, and continuous strain. Something must be done to raise the emolument of the teacher

above that of the artisan or the policeman, and to place him upon a level with members of other professions such as medicine or law, considering that he is quite as indispensable as they are, for he is the artificer of the nation.

It is not for me to attempt to indicate here what the actual emolument of the teacher should be. The increased cost of living, housing, and locomotion have all to be taken into account, together with the inadequacy of pre-war salaries. No scale of salary that I have yet seen proposed appears to be sufficient. The maximum obtainable appears to be about £450, equal in purchasing power to less than £225 before the war. But that maximum will be reached by only a small percentage. The minimum still means genteel starvation, and probably for the unfortunate uncertificated teachers starvation without the gentility. It must be remembered also that the teacher cannot carry on his work with self-respect or the respect of others, without clothing and accessories such as a skilled artisan receiving the same wage would not require. The harpies of society, the money-lenders, know this well. I recently received a money-lender's circular, addressed particularly "to the members of the scholastic profession." It is greatly to be feared that such appeals to impecuniosity are not made in vain, and that not only the efficiency of the teachers, but also that of the schools, are affected in consequence.

The teacher has always suffered, and is still suffering, from the traditions of the past, of times when little value was placed on education, when his emoluments were limited by the varying amounts derived from voluntary subscriptions and school pence, and any

small wage was considered good enough for him. From these meagre pittances, the permission of which was a disgrace to the State, the average salary has risen with extreme slowness, partly because the Treasury increased their grants with miserable parsimoniousness (any increase being usually given for political, not educational reasons), partly because, so long as School Boards and Voluntary schools existed, the pressure of the ratepayers on School Boards, and the limited—and constantly decreasing—means of Voluntary school managers precluded all “unnecessary” expenditure.

In recent years, since the County Councils became the local authorities, the pressure of the ratepayers has still been operative, and there are signs that in the present day it is becoming stronger. That result was only to be expected from the enormous increase in rates generally since the war, and its most unequal incidence. The remedy seems to be to transfer a large part—possibly the whole—of the burden of the education rate or the increase from the rates to the taxes. That would mean more national expenditure for national service, and the burden would fall on all, instead of on the limited number of persons who pay rates. Tens of thousands of persons who are taxpayers pay no rates.

The teacher, though not technically a civil servant, as he is not in the direct employment of the State, is a public servant, and in the present day he is paid wholly out of public money. So far as possible, therefore, I think that his position should be assimilated to that of civil servants.

Further, speaking generally, the duties of a teacher of either sex are similar in every locality and every



school, except that, in certain cases, local conditions may vary, or a larger and more onerous responsibility may be involved.

I should like to suggest that, as in the Civil Service, there should be a uniform, fixed minimum salary (a living wage) for every teacher of each class at the commencement of his service, rising by an annual increment to a fixed maximum, not dependent on promotion but simply on service. This maximum to be reached within a reasonable period, say fifteen years' service, and to be the same for both sexes. I have never been able to appreciate the force of the arguments against "equal pay for equal work."

In every locality specially responsible positions or specially difficult schools should be scheduled, and the schedule approved by the Board of Education. Special salaries should be attached to teachers holding special positions, in addition to the salaries that can be reached by service alone, the whole salary to count for pension.

Such a system might not wholly get rid of jobbery or favouritism, but it would considerably limit it.

## VII

### THE CIVIL SERVICE

WHATEVER defects existed in the Civil Service under normal peace conditions have been emphasised by the war and by the aftermath of the war. The reputation of the Service has been besmirched, its honourable traditions of economy and efficient administration have been thrown to the winds. Nothing else perhaps could have been expected at a time when profuse expenditure was regarded as commendable, and when men without experience were constantly being placed in control of staffs which they did not know how to manage, and were entrusted with duties of organisation which they did not understand. Their failures have been carefully concealed, but enough has leaked out, here and there, to show that a thorough overhauling is necessary. The method usually adopted for the purpose of cleaning up a Government office is to appoint a Committee consisting of civil servants (who know that their prospects would be injured if they signed a report unacceptable to the Government), with an odd member of Parliament, or perhaps two members, thrown in, and a chairman to cram the Government views down the throats of the Committee. The result is that the job is never properly done. The

Committee reports, some small changes are made in consequence, then the report is pigeon-holed and the Office goes on as before. What is really needed to cope with the present situation is a Committee consisting of a majority of strong business men outside the Civil Service altogether, with a minority of *retired* Civil Servants (who would have nothing to lose by honesty), and the Committee should have power to require their recommendations to be carried into effect unless good reason could be given in Parliament for rejecting them. An ordinary report, dependent for acceptance of its proposals on confirmation by a Minister, would be quite valueless. The inflated Civil Service of to-day needs strong medicine and no bread pills, which are all it is likely to get from heads of Departments, who are obviously trying to satisfy Mr. Lloyd George's new-born appetite for economy with the smallest possible morsels.

Under the influence of the various discreditable panics which afflicted the Government during the war, a plethora of new and unnecessary Ministries were created, all with their own Parliamentary chiefs, and with enormous and expensive staffs. The Treasury appears to have abrogated its functions, or to have been incapable of performing them, in the face of the mass of questions which must have fallen within its purview, and of the futility of opposing the most recklessly extravagant Government which ever ruled this country. The well-known Treasury "No" seems to have been supplanted by a uniform "Yes," like the automatic squeaking of a child's trumpet in the same key, but perhaps Treasury consent was never asked for by the war dictators, or possibly only asked as a matter of form.

The result has been an orgy of prodigality, employment of large numbers of unnecessary and incompetent officials, and, worst of all, the setting up of vested interests wholesale. This fact must necessarily constitute the main difficulty. It needs but the stroke of a pen to put a man on the establishment of a Government Office, but once there he has a freehold. He is engaged for his working life, and it certainly would not be fair to him, and it would destroy public confidence, if his services were suddenly dispensed with because he had become redundant. If the State makes a promise it must fulfil it. The remedy seems to be not only to transfer men from Departments whose *raison d'être* has disappeared, to those where vacancies have necessarily to be filled, but also to offer liberal compensation to men who desire to leave the service. That would be cheaper in the long run than retaining them for years growing fossilised in idleness, or occupying positions which could be more cheaply filled. I believe such terms would be accepted by many, inasmuch as where large numbers of officials are redundant the chances of promotion are greatly diminished, and the clerk of only average capacity has little to look forward to. Those parts of the staffs which are temporary can be more easily dealt with, for they have no vested interests; but even in their case there would be a justifiable outcry if they were thrown out before they had been given full opportunity of finding other employment. They themselves would be in no hurry to exchange the easy-going routine of a Government Office for the stricter and more cogent calls of real business. It will, and it must, be long before a complete return can be made to anything like an

efficient reorganisation of the service. But assuredly, whatever steps are taken to that end, no injustice must be done for political objects.

A great part of the prodigal expenditure has been incurred in consequence of the multiplication of separate Ministries. No sooner did some section of the public, some body of faddists, or a few members of the House of Commons, all wholly ignorant of the vast possibilities of departmental devolution, agitate for a new Ministry, than the thing was done. Some old Ministry kitted accordingly. The new Government Office was duly set up, with its Parliamentary chiefs, secretaries, assistant secretaries, and various grades of clerks, permanent and temporary. It was a great opportunity for favouritism and jobbery.

To persuade the Government was easy. Indeed, they probably in some cases set the agitation going for their own political purposes. What did it matter what it cost the country, so long as it increased their political stability? Every new Office meant to them another (or perhaps more than one) supporter in Parliament on whom they could absolutely rely in every division, because he was tied to them, not merely by party, but by the even more potent considerations of position and salary. It is no bad thing for the stability of a Government that it should be able to depend, in every division in the House of Commons, on a solid nucleus of some seventy Ministers. Such a nucleus, even when in pre-war times when it was much smaller, has many a time saved the life of an administration.

But most of these mushroom Ministries are, as a matter of fact, quite unnecessary for the public service. If their business had been placed in the

hands of sub-departments of the Ministries from which they sprang, it would have been conducted equally efficiently, or perhaps even more efficiently, as the staff would have been more experienced as a whole, and the business of a new Ministry must necessarily to a large extent continue to interlock with that of its parent. The kitten can be only gradually weaned.

When I was Secretary of the Education Department, the Secretaryship of the Science and Art Department (which was under the same Parliamentary heads) became vacant, and I was asked whether I could undertake the charge of both Departments, which in that event might be subsequently united (as in fact happened) as a single Education Office by statutory provision. I replied, "Yes, certainly; there is no difficulty about it; it is simply a matter of devolution within the Office. Let me have two principal assistant Secretaries, the most capable men I can find, and I will undertake to administer." That arrangement was carried out, and proved satisfactory, so far, at any rate, as the organisation was concerned.

I have been wondering lately whether an excuse might not be found by the Government to set up a few separate Ministries out of the disintegration of the Board of Education. They could have Ministries for general education (elementary and secondary), another for science, and another for art, and possibly others, and they could discover, no doubt, plenty of faddists to justify their action, and a docile majority in Parliament to endorse it.

I observe that, certainly up to a very recent date, the Civil Service Commissioners, notwithstanding

the enormous surplus of clerks, were still examining candidates. Why they did so is a mystery, but it probably was simply in adherence to red-tape routine. Of course, such proceedings ought to have been stopped long ago. But it is nobody's business to interfere with drift and red tape.

The mistake that was apparently made when the new Departments were set up was that *any* additional clerks were engaged for a longer period than the duration of the war. The new Offices undoubtedly required an experienced higher staff, much more experienced, in fact, than they actually got. But that could have been obtained by taking permanent clerks from some of the old Offices that were not greatly affected by the war—except so far as men were drawn from them for active service in the army—and their places should have been filled by clerks engaged on temporary terms, who might or might not have been placed on the permanent staff of the service after the actual war wastage had been ascertained. I should very much like to know the number of *permanent* officials who are redundants. It will be long before they can be usefully absorbed in a reconstructed Civil Service, and in the meantime they cost money which can ill be spared

## VIII

### A FINAL WORD

THERE have been any number of so-called "books of exposure" issued from the Press recently, and this volume is to some extent such a book. But, unlike the rest, it does not deal with the scandals of the war, but with the scandals of peace; and it is hoped it may have some effect in warning the public against their recurrence, and in laying bare the shams and monstrosities which disfigure our civil organisations and our political system.

The time has come to clean up. Public opinion is calling for it. Is the cleaning up to be left to a Labour Government, or are the present dominant Parties going to accept the warning and do something to reconstitute the State on a less corrupt basis?

I am afraid that in this book scant respect has been shown for dignities, whether conferred for hereditary, political, or religious reasons. They are of no benefit to the State, and are often given for inefficiency pure and simple, as in the cases where political failures are translated to the House of Lords. That is a common solatium to the big or rich incompetents. It deprives them of the power of doing mischief, and as to their descendants we have to trust to luck. I suppose, however, that in our artificial society dignities are





## APPENDIX I

### ADDRESS PRESENTED AT THE BUXTON CONFERENCE 1903 BY THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS

#### IN MEMORY OF TEN YEARS OF BENEFICENT ADMINISTRATION

1890.	1900.
Secretary Education Department.	Secretary Board of Education.

TO THEIR FRIEND SIR GEORGE WILLIAM KEKEWICH, K.C.B., D.C.L., the members of the National Union of Teachers express unfailing loyalty and gratitude. They remember how, as Secretary of the Education Department, he broke with the tradition of a cold repressive attitude towards the associated teachers and their representations ; how, from the first, his ear has been open to their pleas for reform, their claim for due freedom, their cry for justice, and their appeal for aid ; how, under his kindly, sage, and liberating rule, old fetters have been struck away from schools and teachers ; how upon the grave of payments according to mechanical results and annual individual examination has been lifted the fair fabric of free classification, sympathetic intelligent inspection, and reliable grants in aid ; how, as far as in him lay, he has given to teachers freedom to teach their best, trusting them, heartening them, and helping them to realise ideals which before his day seemed "such stuff as dreams are made on," impossible to attain. They recall his noble service in the cause of pensions and superannuation allowances for the aged and outworn, his support to the Benevolent and

Orphan Fund, his paternal interest in all that makes for the dignity, liberty, and general weal of the profession. The Executive rejoice to assure him that, alike in village school and city class-room "from Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay," the members of the State's great teaching service, schoolmaster and schoolmistress, principal and assistant, old and young, all hold him warmly in their hearts as trusted chief and honoured friend. They feel that the duties of his high office could not have been confided into kindlier, wiser, stronger hands than his; they know that his administration of that office has brought him "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends." Gratefully the Executive bear this testimony and hopefully they wish him God-speed through long remaining years of distinguished usefulness to Education and the State.

NOTE.—This address, as will be seen from the heading, was intended to be presented in 1900 when the Secretaryship of the Board of Education was created. As the presentation was deferred until 1903, a silver plate was affixed, with the following addition:

"Upon the retirement of Sir George Kekewich from the post of Secretary to the Board of Education, April 1903, the Executive and members of the National Union of Teachers enthusiastically repeat and emphasise the words of appreciation and gratitude contained in the book here enclosed, and testify to the skilful, faithful, and genial discharge of duty, which to the end of his term of office made him a benefactor to the children, a friend to the teachers, and a pilot of educational reform."

## APPENDIX II

At the meeting of the National Union of Teachers the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

“ That upon the occasion of the retirement of Sir George Kekewich, after twelve years as Secretary at the Education Office, during which the curricula, teaching, and inspection of Elementary Schools have been step by step reformed, and to educate the children intelligently and sympathetically has been made possible by the administrative changes which his influence brought about, the Executive of the National Union of Teachers desire to express regret at the loss of his invaluable services to the Nation, and to thank him, with a warm and lasting gratitude, for the great good to education which he has done.”

### APPENDIX III

*Reprinted Article from "The Schoolmaster" of Nov. 8, 1902*

SIR GEORGE KEKEWICH has relinquished his post at the Board of Education. The week which brought to teachers the news of the boon involved in appeals against unjustifiable dismissals and protection against extraneous tasks brought also the news of the Secretary's retirement. Our readers would be unprepared for the announcement. They may have heard that Sir George's health was slightly failing and that there had been rumours of even an earlier desire to rest; they may have heard whispers that during the Vice-Presidency of Sir John Gorst the relations between the Secretary and the Vice-President were not those which obtained during the Vice-Presidentship of Mr. Acland and earlier of Sir William Hart Dyke. But if so, doubtless they would have reflected that official association with an educationist so able and so true a gentleman as Sir William Anson might deter Sir George from his desire to enter private life for a time. Something of a thunderclap, therefore, would be the news which appeared in the daily newspapers of Saturday last. Among the earliest journals to comment on the retirement of this faithful and distinguished public servant was the *Globe* of that date, which said: "After such long and, we may add, eminent service to the cause of education, Sir George may well feel that he is entitled to ask for rest, especially in view of the complete change which the Education Bill will necessarily work in his Department. We could have wished, however, that he could have seen his way to smooth, by the exercise of his great experience, the innumerable small

difficulties which must arise when the Act first comes into operation.' That of course would be the tenor of all the comments in the press upon the regretted retirement, but, after all, a man quite near his sixty-second birthday, in weakened health and confronted by the responsibilities of a legislative and administrative revolution upon which he might enter, but who (by the Civil Service rule) could not hope to see its smooth and perfect development, may well be justified in choosing to make the change beforehand, and take the severance now. His decision is deeply regretted by his colleagues on the Board of Education, and that regret will be shared in by School Board members, school managers, and teachers all over the land. Few men in high official positions have made and kept so many friends and so few foes as he ; the chorus of regret and praise will be almost universal.

For about thirty-six years Sir George Kekewich has served the Education Office. As Senior Examiner he made his mark and was the trusted friend of his colleagues of equal, superior, or inferior official rank. He was, in those days also, the peacemaker and tactful smotherer of difficulties, personal and official, in the Education Department. His sound common sense, disdain of useless red tape, strong bent for business and practicality, as well as openness of mind towards ideas and principles which if new were true, all marked him out as a man especially fit to govern a great and troublous Government Department. The Secretaryship being vacant, he received the promotion, passing over the heads of some older servants, higher in the hierarchy, but doing so without incurring their ill-will. He was "too good a fellow," in the language of the staff, for jealousy to supervene.

He came to the chief post in 1890 nominally, but before that date his influence was at work to produce a salutary change in the Code and the Instructions to Inspectors. Those documents for the year 1889 were mainly due, so far as they were amended, to his hand. The Code and the Instructions of 1890 showed a further advance along right educational lines ; and steadily since that day (except where faddist steps in retrograde have been taken by other powers

### 332 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

at the Department, his political chiefs), the Code and the Instructions have broadened and bettered year by year. The abolition of annual examination of all schools, then of any schools; freedom of classification by educational consideration; the abandonment of grants per pass; class examination, then inspection; variable grants, then the Block Grant; alternative curricula, then the abandonment of fixed curricula and freedom of choice within a wide range: these are among the most striking amendments in the Code which Sir George, with the consent and approval of the political chiefs of the Office, was able to bring about. These alone would mark him out as the greatest Secretary to the Education Department since Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, who was, however, himself inferior in several respects to the subject of this sketch. But these reforms do not stand alone.

Upon coming to the Secretarial post Sir George discovered in full that deplorable condition of his Department which he had long suspected, and, within his range, had previously tried to amend. The staff itself was at sixes and sevens; the Inspectors in particular were ill-content with the work they had to do and the way in which they were instructed to do it. School Boards and School Committees all over the country complained of the procrastination and general inefficiency of the Department. Above all, the great army of teachers was very near revolt.

Much of the procrastination and inefficiency of the Department could be altered by internal measures. The inspectional grievances could be affected by alteration in the mode of testing the schools and promoting the Inspectors. The changes in the Code could assuage some of the teachers' complaints. But beyond and above all that it was the air, attitude, tone, and receptivity of the new Secretary that worked the miracle of appeasement and cleared the path to reform. Until his day the representations made by the National Union of Teachers had been fended off as much as possible, and when that was impossible the Union had been heard, and then snubbed. Former officials, it is said, upon reading

a letter from Dr. Heller, as Secretary of the Union, were wont to docket it with the eloquent letters "U B D" as instructions to the clerk who was to prepare and pen the reply. Backed by Sir William Hart Dyke and Mr. Acland in turn, the new Secretary altered all that. At a time when the Union had little political power, was numerically weak and was not heard in Parliament, Sir George received its representations courteously, gave interviews to its deputations, consulted its secretary and others beforehand as to pending changes, and established relations of mutual confidence and esteem. To-day the Union stands strong enough, perhaps, not to fear an adverse attitude by the Board of Education, and to cause a friendly attitude to be maintained, indeed. But in 1890 that was not the case, and the teachers owe deep and lasting gratitude to the man who gave to the Union then, out of sympathy and fairness, a reception which could not have been secured in any other way. In the legislation which has marked the development of education since then, Sir George took a guiding Departmental share. The Board of Education Bill which unified the central control of the schools was largely due to his hand. Teachers will recall with especial gratitude that it was he who presided over the Departmental Committee on teachers' superannuation. The efforts of the Union in 1893 had induced the House of Commons to affirm the principle of superannuating teachers; in 1895 and 1896 the efforts of members of the Union who were M.P.'s pushed the matter further, and a Committee was appointed. The Report of this Committee and the drafting of the Bill which became law in 1898 were mainly due to Sir George Kekewich.

It can be said of this great servant of education that his hands unfastened the knot which the perverse Robert Lowe tied about the schools in a strangling manner; that he, by his kind wisdom and tactful energy, made the Code a decently educational document, that he tamed the wrath of enemies of his Department into the affection of friends, that he smoothed the path of thousands of teachers and brightened the lives of millions of children; that he rendered, at a critical and perilous time, inestimable service to the education cause.



From all this he now goes into retirement. He will now be able to satisfy to the full his love for the salmon river in South Wales and the strolls with his gun on his meadows at Sunbury. But, as he showed many times in the past, by his presence at meetings of teachers and other educationists, and at openings of schools, with words of wisdom and cheer (such as "Every time I see a school opened, I say, there goes a prison cell"), he is not likely to cease to think about education. In the end of his days, which it is to be hoped will be long, he will retain not only the gratitude of the teachers, but the qualities and the interest in the schools which made that gratitude to be so richly due and paid.

## APPENDIX IV

### CHAOS IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

*Reprinted from "Truth" of August 15, 1901, by permission  
of the Editor*

A GENTLEMAN who is a recognised authority upon matters relating to education lately sent me the following description of the present condition of the headquarters of public education in this country. I believe it to be substantially accurate, and the state of things it describes ought not to be allowed to continue :

The Duke of Devonshire is President of the Board of Education, and Sir John Gorst is his lieutenant. The Duke sometimes visits his Department ; Sir John Gorst goes there a little more frequently. Thanks to the indolence of the Duke and active misfeasance on the part of Sir John Gorst, the condition of the Education Office, which under Mr. Acland was one of the most efficient of Government bureaux, has become in the highest degree scandalous. The permanent Secretary for the past twelve years has been Sir George Kekewich, a pleasant, sensible man of business, and not at all a hide-bound official. Sir George Kekewich, however, and Sir John Gorst have practically ceased to be on speaking terms with each other. Sir John, in fact, is hardly on speaking terms with anybody—even with himself. The Duke of Devonshire well knows the unhappy condition of his Department, but he is too lazy to interfere. He yawns and lets things slide. Down among the "Brompton Boilers" there

is another Education Bureau. The Secretary is Sir William Abney. As Vice-President Sir John Gorst has the right to go there and the power to make things equally unworkable and equally uncomfortable, of which he has fully availed himself. Three years ago this Science and Art Department was supposed to be overhauled and reformed. Sir John has done nothing to carry the promised reform into effect, and he has turned the Department into an agency for doles of public money to inefficient and unpopular endowed grammar schools.

The cost of administering the Education Offices amounted last year to £81,881. Of that sum Sir John Gorst drew £2000, although under his rule most of the money has been wasted so far as the advancement of popular education is concerned. I admire Sir John Gorst's wit and envy his philosophy, but as a Minister of Public Instruction he is simply pantaloons in a screaming harlequinade. He is an unpractical man, and in matters of business an impossible colleague. Members of Parliament say that when they sat with him in Select Committee upon the misdeeds of the South Kensington gang they could do nothing and get nothing done until they had fired Sir John out of the chair. Lord Salisbury threw him the Education Department like a bone to a hungry dog. He gnaws it, and has pretty well destroyed it. In the House of Commons he has few associates, and his fellow Ministers practically ignore him. Whenever he feels particularly grumpy he relieves his mind by going down to his Department and smashing things. He makes eloquent speeches full of platitudes on the subject of education, and then sticks the blunt ends of crowbars into pieces of useful educational machinery that have taken years of painful effort to construct. As a Ministerial torpedo or ram he is a great success. As a constructor of Education Bills, Codes, and Minutes he is a pernicious failure. In six years hardly one of his legislative proposals has got through the House of Commons. The Duke of Devonshire, who takes his cue from Sir John, has been even less successful in the House of Lords.

Sir John Gorst does not consult his colleagues at the Board of Education upon anything that he is going to say or do. He was hand in glove with the Cecils over the Cockerton Judgment business, and separated himself from the permanent officers of his Department, who protested against the plan in vain. He has at hand the most valuable expert advice, but he declines to take it, and embarks on a course of mischief-making apparently with supreme enjoyment to himself. Some months ago it was stated in public by Professor Massie or the chairman of the Bradford School Board—I forget which—that the permanent Civil servants at the Board of Education were never consulted during the planning of Education Bill No. 1, which, it will be remembered, failed to reach a second reading in the House of Commons. This statement is a serious imputation of bad faith against Sir John Gorst, and some official denial might have been expected if it was unfounded, but none has been forthcoming. I believe that the same statement may be made with equal truth about the wretched little Bill which was closed through the House of Commons a few nights ago. It sprang from the brain of Sir John Gorst alone. So did the Evening Schools Minute—a miracle of mischievous gestation. Sir John Gorst's relations with his own colleagues and staff are paralleled by those with the local educational authorities. He enjoys the services of a private secretary, who happens for the moment to be a long-suffering, well-meaning junior official of the name of Morant. In order to gather materials for his much-admired caricatures of higher-grade schools, Sir John caused letters to be sent to the principal School Boards on May 31. They were signed by Mr. R. L. Morant, and stated that the answers were to be addressed to that gentleman. Now, the printed regulations of the Board of Education require all letters to be addressed to "The Secretary, Board of Education, Whitehall, S.W.," and the Secretary is Sir George Kekewich, not Mr. Morant. The Bradford School Board accordingly replied to Mr. Morant's letter that they must respectfully decline to correspond except through the duly accredited head of the

Department. On July 8, however, Sir John Gorst gave the House of Commons to understand that the Bradford School Board had refused to supply information to the Board of Education. Thus Sir John attempts to get information from School Boards in an irregular way, behind the backs of his own colleagues; and when a School Board defeats the attempt by insisting on the ordinary course of business being adhered to, a misleading version of the incident is given in Parliament, which is calculated to damage the Board in question. Sir John has created among the sub-inspectors of the Board of Education a feeling very similar to that entertained by his own colleagues. The sub-inspectors are the men who do the real work of testing the education given in Board and Voluntary schools all over the country. Above these hard-working officials are the inspectors proper, who obtain their comfortable posts by family and political influence. Sir John has invented a new class of officers who rank between these two. He calls them "junior inspectors." He refuses to promote even the most experienced, able, and learned men among the sub-inspectors to be junior inspectors, but he has promoted all the women, including at least one whose advancement is not warranted by any qualifications. Again, the instructions to inspectors is an important document annually issued to inspectors of School Boards, school committees, and teachers. It has usually made its appearance about Easter. This year it is four months in arrear, and I shall be surprised if the delay is due to anybody but Sir John Gorst himself. Anyhow, the fact is a proof of the extent to which the work of the Department is out of gear, and many more of a similar character might be cited.

Sir John Gorst's prolonged retention of his present post is one of the great political mysteries of the day. While his colleagues on the Ministerial bench show little appreciation of him, he openly sneers and jeers at them just as he did when Under-Secretary for India and Secretary to the Treasury. I have heard it openly stated that last year he was asked to resign, and that he refused. This may possibly account for the fact that since that date he has set himself more vigorously

than ever to throw the educational machinery of the country into confusion and to assist the Cecils in their venomous crusade against School Boards. The result of his doings during the past year, however, can hardly be contemplated with satisfaction by his colleagues in the Government.\* I have no animus against him. Personally I like him much. He is the wittiest man on the Treasury Bench, and a standing source of amusement to the House of Commons. But for the sake of the country and the cause of education, even those who like him best ought to make up their minds to part with him.

•

In the last remark I entirely concur, and though I, too, have a liking for Sir John Gorst as a man and an M.P., I could, for the sake of the country, consent to part with him as an Education Minister. By universal admission the improvement of our system of public education is of vital consequence to the prosperity of the nation and the maintenance of our position in the world. I question whether, in the present phase of the struggle for existence among nations, the Education Office is not as important to the safety of the State as the War Office or the Admiralty. If that is true, or even if it is only half-true, the continuance of the state of chaos and paralysis that prevails under the Duke of Devonshire and Sir John Gorst is a national danger.

## APPENDIX V

### CORRUPT GOVERNMENT—THE CAUCUS AND ELECTIONS

By Sir GEORGE W. KEKEWICH

(Member of the Council of the National League for  
Clean Government).

*Reprinted from "Everyman" of December 24, 1913.*

It is the purpose of these articles, the contents of which are, to some extent, drawn from personal experience, to expose a system of government which has created a tyranny of wealth and has degraded political life by destroying freedom of action and independence.

There is no intention or desire to attack individuals. We justly pride ourselves on the fact that among Ministers of the Crown, members of Parliament, and Civil Servants—the three bodies to whom the actual control of the government of the country is virtually entrusted—actual bribery is non-existent. But it is, nevertheless, the case that corruption—that is to say, the undue influence of money—has been, through the power of the caucus, stereotyped in the constituencies, in Parliamentary elections, and even in Parliament itself. It has been so gradually introduced, so scientifically organised, and so artistically concealed that, though it may not have altogether escaped notice, the public generally have come to regard it as an everyday matter. Its morality is not called in question, and if the Corrupt Practices Acts are

infringed, no public condemnation follows. It is no question of party—the two great political parties which alternately share the Government are equally culpable, and obviously the Labour and Irish parties are not implicated.

The caucus system was devised in order to organise the electoral machinery in every constituency by the creation of local political bodies, affiliated to, and practically guided and controlled by, a central body in London. The central body is dominated by the Parliamentary “Whips” and the official managers. The caucus has served its purpose completely. But it has done much more. It has become an instrument of political slavery; it has been used to corrupt the electorate, to destroy the liberty of Parliament, and to establish a system of political despotism.

The methods may perhaps be best and most easily illustrated by taking the case of a borough, as in the less centralised county constituencies the machinery, though similar in principle, is apt to be looser and less highly organised.

The borough is divided into wards. In every ward there are Conservative and Liberal Ward Committees, whose duty is to ascertain the views of the individual electors of the ward, to promote in it the propaganda of the party, and to elect delegates to the central local caucus. This last body, through its officers, attends to the registration of electors, provides canvassing books, advises the Ward Committees, and generally furthers the interests of the party in the borough.

- At first sight it might appear that there could be no great harm in such an institution, except that it would be likely to extend its operations, as it often does, to municipal elections (which ought to be decided on quite other grounds than politics), and that it would lead to an undesirable crystallisation of individual opinions.

The proceedings of the caucus in connection with Parliamentary elections show up its iniquities in a lurid light.

Before the days of the caucus, when a Parliamentary vacancy had to be filled, the electors of the constituency selected their own candidate. Meetings were called, requis-



## 342 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

tions were signed asking persons of good reputation (usually belonging to the locality) to stand, and the man who appeared to be most popular was, if he consented, put forward as a candidate. That kind of procedure was democratic, which the present method is not.

Since the introduction of the caucus system the electors generally have had no choice. The choice has nominally rested with the local and central caucuses. But actually it always lies with the two or three chief officials of the latter body.

What is the method? A list of persons who desire seats in Parliament (the pushful, not the competent) is kept at the central office. It is a carpet-bag list.

The agent of the local caucus calls at the office. It is possible he may suggest a local candidate, but it does not by any means follow that a local candidate will be accepted. Others may have better claims, founded on their wealth or party services, or both. The official produces his list, the articles on hand are spread out for selection. If he is out of the kind of goods required, the order is left with him, to be fulfilled subsequently.

If a man is selected, the Central Office (not the local) communicate with him, and recommend the constituency to him. If he consents to stand, the local caucus send up a deputation to interview him, ostensibly to ascertain his political views, but principally to discover whether he is able and will consent to vie with his opponent in subscribing handsomely to the various local institutions, charities, clubs, societies, hospitals, ecclesiastical bodies, sports, and so fulfil the whole duty of a candidate. Especially, however, they want to know how much he will contribute annually to the caucus itself. That is very essential. So long as the caucus has no candidate representing it, it is maintained in a state of semi-starvation by the very limited subscriptions of its members; but so soon as a candidate has been obtained, even those poor tributes to their political creed can be, and often are, largely withdrawn and the burden shifted on the candidate. If he is rich, it does not matter; if he is com-

paratively poor, he may grumble. But it does not help him ; the caucus is out for its pound of flesh, and takes no denial.

Then the candidate is adopted, as a matter of course, and his troubles begin. He is shot at by every institution, etc., in the place. If he is to have the honour of representing the people he must first maintain them. And his opponent must not be permitted to outdo him in this important matter. If he does not bleed sufficiently freely, men, even of his own party, and even of position and influence in the constituency, stand at the street corners, jeering at and pitying him, and repeating the parrot cry, "He is no good to the borough!" Wealth, freely and unscrupulously used, will carry an election in any constituency where parties are at all evenly balanced. If the candidate is elected he can only keep his seat by making himself a sort of political relieving officer. A member of Parliament is, indeed, worse off than a mere candidate, because there are many means of conciliating an electorate by the free distribution of money, other gifts, entertainments, etc., which are not legal for a candidate, but perfectly legal for a member of Parliament. The disabilities of the latter do not begin until Parliament has been dissolved, and he is again a candidate only.

These subscriptions are pure bribery, mainly of what is called the middle class. There is not a decent man of any shade of opinion who does not deplore the system, but no Government has yet had the courage to attack it. The excuse is that a few votes might be lost, while probably none would be gained. The writer, in conversation with a Cabinet Minister in the House of Commons, once expressed his abhorrence of the practice, and suggested its prohibition. The answer was that it could not be done, because such a measure would not be popular. That is always the obstacle to ending any kind of abuse that brings in money to somebody.

Truly, if it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, he may derive some compensation from the ease with which he may become a legislator in this world.

If a member of Parliament happens to offend the caucus by committing the unforgivable sin of impecuniosity, there

### 344 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

is no hope for him. His iniquity is reported at once to the central caucus. The little tattling tongues of the wire-pullers in his constituency stick at no kind of misrepresentation. Their greedy mouths froth with venom. The member cannot defend himself without sacrificing his self-respect, while the central caucus, and even the local electors, believe all the lies that are poured into their ears in a never-ending stream. Faithful and industrious work for his constituents, public services, integrity, all go for nothing. He is drummed out of the place and boycotted by the central caucus besides. If he happens to come into or amass a fortune he may be welcomed once again to their arms, but under no other conditions.

He is often, under such circumstances, asked to attend a meeting of the local caucus. If he consents, expecting possibly that human feelings may prevail with them, he obtains no quarter. They ask him what he means by his conduct, accuse him (very probably truly) of not having fulfilled his undertaking to provide them with money, and, in short, abuse him to their hearts' content. They tell him he has no chance of re-election—which, no doubt, is perfectly true—unless he acquires the means of satisfying them. The very last thing they think of is to help him to provide an election fund, or to provide a sum sufficient to run their own caucus. Every penny must come out of the member's pocket; the honour of representing them must be bought—a fact which may be held by some people to detract somewhat from the value of the honour. No doubt, however, the payment of members—the £400 a year—has removed a good deal of tension between members and their constituents. It would be interesting to have a return of how the money is spent.

All this may be termed *indirect* bribery. But direct bribery, although it may not be so general or so unblushing as it was before the Reform Acts, still exists in many localities. Is it to be wondered at, when wholesale corruption between elections proceeds unchecked and uncondemned, that those who are excluded from its benefits, the poorest and most

uneducated of voters, look to the election itself as their golden opportunity? Is it to be expected that the illegality of accepting money for their votes will deter them, when they have examples of legal bribery under their very eyes, year in and year out?

On the contrary, the wonder is that direct bribery is not more prevalent than it is. In the form of actual money payment it is now confined, as a rule, to a certain number of the smaller borough constituencies. In the counties and large cities such practices are not easy, for the area is large, the possible bribes sporadic, and the organisation of bribery on a considerable and profitable scale consequently difficult. In such places the bribes usually take the shape of bags of potatoes, hundredweights of coal, legs of mutton, grants from charitable funds, or lying promises, and are usually offered in the excitement of the election by private persons unconnected, except by politics, with the candidate.

In some of the boroughs, however, bribery is traditional and deep-rooted. A certain number of men will not vote at all without their usual payment, and not infrequently they get it from both sides, if possible. The tariff is well known—"five shillings down and five shillings more if we win." Half these amounts in the case of a municipal election. Free beer is another method. Thirty or forty pounds is sometimes sent to public-houses on the morning of an election.

The candidate never bribes in person. The arrangements are left to agents, though the money usually, if not always, comes out of the candidate's pockets. Either the candidate may place in trustworthy hands some time before the election a sum of money for general party purposes, and require no account of its expenditure, or he may trust to his agents to spend money out of their own pocket or borrowed from supporters, and recoup them after the election is over and the return of election expenses has been duly made out.

It is very rarely that this return exceeds the statutory limit. But in many cases it is kept down only by omitting items of expenditure which may or may not be illegal, but which ought to be included.

The means of stopping direct bribery is easy enough, if only any Government had the courage to use it.

At present the bribee, being equally subject to penalties with the briber, naturally keeps his own counsel. But if a short amendment of the Corrupt Practices Acts was passed exempting the bribee from any penalty (and possibly increasing those on the briber), no one would run the risk of placing himself at the mercy of the bribee, and subjecting himself to a kind of constant blackmail. If he did he would richly<sup>t</sup> deserve his fate.<sup>a</sup>

There is no doubt that the briber is more culpable than the<sup>e</sup> bribed. The latter is always a man belonging to quite the<sup>r</sup> lowest strata of workers or loafers, to whom ten shillings means much, whether for beer or his wife, as the case may be. Slums, drunkenness, and low wages are responsible for the output of bribers. The trade unionist, the skilled artisan, the educated worker, so far from taking a bribe, would be likely to make things very unpleasant for the man who offered it. On the other hand, the bribers are often men of position, who, in their private intercourse and public work, are credited with all the virtues.

Candidates' subscriptions, whether to the local caucus or institutions, should be prohibited except in cases where they had been given during some years before a man became a candidate. Such a measure, if it did not destroy the local caucus system, would at any rate modify its evil influence. If men are sufficiently keen in their political views to form party associations, it is surely not too much to ask them to<sup>s</sup> support such associations, instead of blackmailing parliamentary candidates.

If, in addition, the expenses of elections were paid out of the public purse—subject to certain safeguards against a plurality of candidates—the wealthy man would give place to the best man, and the constitution of Parliament would profit exceedingly.

## APPENDIX VI

### CORRUPT GOVERNMENT—PARLIAMENT, PARTY, AND HONOURS

By Sir GEORGE W. KEKEWICH  
(Member of the Council of the National League for  
Clean Government).

*Reprinted from "Everyman" of January 2, 1914.*

VERY few of those who enter Parliament for the first time have any idea of the rigorous disciplinary methods prevailing there, or the extent to which individual liberty is restricted. Every man belonging to the two great parties is a slave to party, always under the lash of the party Whip. He is compelled to vote, always, not on the question that has been discussed, but as he is ordered to vote by the Government or the Opposition leaders, as the case may be. If he dares to prefer either his conscience or the pledges he has given to his constituents to the blind support of his party, he will probably receive a letter from the Chief Whip, lecturing him in somewhat the same terms as an Oxford or Cambridge tutor might employ to undergraduates, though possibly not so polite. If he repents, puts on sackcloth and ashes, and promises amendment, all will be well—except that a black mark will be registered against him.

If, on the contrary, he remains recalcitrant he will be ostracised. In what may be called bad cases he may incur the dire penalty of no longer receiving day by day the party

Parliamentary literature in relation to the comparative urgency of business. Such a penalty implies his exclusion from the party in Parliament; and if he still refuses to kneel before his superiors and implore mercy, he is driven out of Parliament at the earliest opportunity. Nothing else matters—previous party services, public services, and record are absolutely ignored. Work for the people does not count.

It is, of course, the case that a man is returned to Parliament to support his party; but he also gave definite pledges to his constituents on the strength of which he received their votes. Clearly his first duty is to keep or place, as the case may be, his party in power. But when there is, or ought to be, no consideration of that kind involved in the actual question before the House, equally clearly he ought to be free to fulfil his pledges to his constituents.

Let us take a concrete case of a non-party character, seeing that it might arise under any Government. Many members have pledged themselves, either from conviction or for vote-catching, to support the remission of some particular Customs duty—let us say the duty on tea. When the Budget is introduced, it is found that the duty is retained, and that its retention is essential to the general scheme of finance, so that if the remission were carried against the Government they would have no alternative but to resign or dissolve Parliament. That is a position where a pledge to constituents must clearly be subordinated to the greater pledge to keep the Government in power.

But when the question is a trifling one—as, for instance, an unimportant variation of a clause in a Bill—the same kind of pressure is put on a member to vote against his conscience. The reason is that a Government may resign or dissolve on any issue, however small, and in any case a defeat be regarded as weakening their position. The member has no will of his own from the moment he enters Parliament. Being constantly under the thumb of the caucus and the control of the Whips (which, indeed, amount to much the same thing), and subject to extreme political penalties in the event of his deviating, however slightly, from the path

marked out for him, he pays very dearly for such honour as he gets.

The rule should be that no Government should resign office or dissolve Parliament on any vote of the House of Commons unless they have previously declared that they would regard defeat on the particular issue as a vote of want of confidence. If such were the case, defeats on unimportant matters would soon lose their significance in the eyes of the House and the public, and members of Parliament would cease to be mere automata, and enjoy some real freedom and influence.

All members are under the feet of the Whips, but the worst case is that of the man who has been helped to pay the expenses of his election by a contribution out of party funds. If a member is a rich man, he may exercise some slight independence with comparative impunity, but if he is poor there is no mercy for him. The party has paid for him, and he is their chattel.

The consequences of this drastic system are absurd enough. During debates, unless it happens that some exceptionally important leader of the Government or Opposition is speaking, when there may or may not be a certain select audience, the House is comparatively empty. It is not necessary that members should know anything about the question before voting. No argument that can be adduced on either side will influence their votes. When the division bell rings, there may not be half a dozen men in the House; but then members troop in from tea-rooms, libraries, dining- and smoking-rooms. They neither know nor care what the issue is. They ask the Whips who stand at the doors of the House, "Which side are we? Are we 'Ayes' or 'Noes'?" They obediently go into the lobby indicated, and then hurry back to their various occupations. Surely this is a travesty of Parliamentary government. One of the most useless as well as the dullest things on earth is an ordinary debate in the House of Commons, which consists mainly of speeches intended to curry favour with members' constituencies, speeches addressed to empty benches.



### 350 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

There is more than one road to promotion and so-called influence in Parliament, but real worth and ability finds quite a secondary place. Money takes precedence, of course. It always does in political life. But another excellent method, especially for the young man, is to hang on to Ministers' coat-tails, flatter them, and jackal for them. It is good, too, to go into Society (with a big S) and get the right side of the wives of Ministers and other political women. It is useful, too, to talk out a debate, when a division might possibly go against the "Party," especially if the question involved is more or less vital, so that Parliament may be prevented from declaring its judgment. For a man in Opposition it is good also to take up valuable time in fatuous questions on absurd subjects, and never, of course, to take "No" for an answer. If in Opposition, the more rubbish a man talks, the more he wastes time, the more likely he is to be included in the next Government, and to receive the salary that he is out for from the money of the unfortunate taxpayers. If, on the other hand, a man is on the Government side, he must, as a rule, hold his tongue. He must submit to the tyranny of the two front benches. Men sitting there may talk about nothing, and say it over and over again, as long as they like, and every debate is arranged as they please. Lists of speakers are arranged, and unless a man is included in those lists he may get up to speak twenty times, however much he knows of the subject under debate, and find himself forestalled. If he wants to speak he must curry favour with the Whips. His slavery to "Party" lies heavy upon him in the House and out of it.

The occupants of the front benches on either side of the House who expound the policy of their party are the present or future Ministers. They form the Executive Government of the day or the future Executive Government of the morrow. They are, or will be, entrusted with the control of finance, trade, local government, the army, the navy, etc., and they are, or will be, responsible for the well-being of the nation. But under the ridiculous system that obtains at present, a capacity for administration and a knowledge of departmental

work is scarcely ever considered as a qualification for a Minister. He is usually appointed because he has made useful speeches in Parliament—useful, not in the sense that they have thrown additional light on the subject under debate, but because they have been damaging to the opposite party. But, of course, there are other reasons. Hereditary legislators are by no means confined to the House of Lords. If you search any list of Ministers, you will find familiar names of what may be called “Ministerial” families. In the House of 1906–1910 there were, for example, on the Government side seven sons of late Cabinet Ministers. Five were in the Government, and one was Parliamentary Secretary to a Cabinet Minister. If this fact was due to a selection of pure merit, it would be a wonderful example for quotation by the Eugenists and by the admirers of an hereditary House of Lords. “Family” seems to play an important part in the formation of Liberal as well as Tory Government.

Before the 1906 election, the writer of this article, in conversation at the Reform Club with a man who is now a Cabinet Minister, happened to condemn in strong terms the so-called sale of honours, and to express a hope that if and when a Liberal Government came into power they would put a stop to the practice. But the future Cabinet Minister did not agree. Said he, “Oh, do you really think that? I, on the contrary, hope we shall sell as many as we possibly can and replenish the party coffers.”

Honours are, of course, not sold in the sense that they are given to the higher bidder. Technically, they are not given by the Government at all; they are merely recommended. To be recommended for knighthood, baronetage, or peerage, a man ought usually to have something, however little, to justify his selection besides a contribution to the funds of his party. There are, moreover, many honours granted for public services into which no consideration of wealth or party enters.

But it is undoubtedly the case that, directly or indirectly, the party funds of every Government are largely derived from the recipients of honours. If it were not so, why should

a Government object to rendering an account of its party funds or to submitting them to audit ?

The Opposition is not in quite the same difficulty. In their case, the money would be subscribed in the hope of favours to come, and they might possibly be able to publish an account, though it would perhaps be somewhat dangerous. As a matter of fact, however, such a thing has been done. The Liberal Opposition, before the 1906 election, published a list of the subscribers to their election fund, with the amount of their contributions—a perfectly straightforward and honest list. But they have published no such list since they came into office, nor, it is imagined, are they likely to do so.

Is there any reason why national honours should not be given for national merit ? To place successful speculators or tradesmen on a level as regards national honour with men who have rendered real service to the country is almost an insult to the latter. But such service is, as a rule, most inadequately recognised, wealth, however obtained, appearing to be regarded as the greater merit. Honours have practically ceased to be honours at all. The sooner, therefore, they are abolished the better. Hereditary honours are ridiculous and absurd in a democratic State. All others, on the present system of recommendation, are open to robbery and nepotism. The only honours should therefore be those conferred automatically, as in the colonies, by the holding of certain public offices.

If this could be done, and the party funds published and audited, a very heavy blow would be dealt to the corruption of the constituencies. It would be the same for both parties, who alternately enjoy the sweets of office. All honour to the first Government that has the courage and the honesty to begin the cleansing process.

## VII

### CORRUPT GOVERNMENT—THE CIVIL SERVICE

By SIR GEORGE W. KEKEWICH

(Member of the Council of the National League for  
Clean Government).

*Reprinted from "Everyman" of January 9, 1914.*

WHATEVER scandals may occur within the walls of a Government office, little enough leaks through to the general public. For their own interest, *those who know*—the employees—preserve a discreet silence. To them the office is their little world, their hopes and ambitions are circumscribed by its boundaries, they can look for no advancement outside it, and they well know that if any of them published any scandal abroad he would be a marked man, with a reputation among his chiefs that would bar him from all future promotion. No sympathy obtained from the outside public would save him from that fate, but it would undoubtedly add to the heinousness of his offence in the eyes of his superiors.

Within the office it is equally impossible for a man to obtain satisfaction for unjust treatment; he is under the despotic rule of the Permanent Secretary, who is responsible, directly or indirectly, for all treatment meted out to the officials. Against his decision there is no appeal, except to the Minister who is the Parliamentary head. But the Minister knows little or nothing about the staff of the huge department of the present day, and has to rely upon what—be it little or much—the permanent official chooses to tell him; and.

## 354 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

moreover, it is a foregone conclusion that he will support the latter, because any other course, according to the accepted rule of the service, would be destructive of authority and discipline.

The grievance of the Civil Servant has no remedy. Yet, in the sister services—the Army and Navy, the soldier and sailor can demand a court-martial. The Civil Servant can do nothing of the kind; he is under a one-man despotism, nominally that of the Minister, actually that of the Permanent Secretary, who holds a real power as “Mayor of the Palace.” Such a despotism, holding in its hands the future careers of men, their success or their failure, is almost invariably pregnant with injustice. It is high time, especially now that Government offices have expanded so enormously, that to every office there should be given a kind of court of appeal, composed of Civil Servants and others unconnected with the particular office, to whom would fall the duty of inquiring into complaints, and who would transmit their decisions or recommendations to the Minister. It should, of course, be an open court, and its record would be some protection against persecution of the witnesses in the future.

But there are not only individual grievances in the Civil Service which cannot be remedied, there are chronic scandals, both of appointment and promotion, calloused, and apparently almost sanctified, by tradition.

It would be exceedingly interesting if some member of Parliament could obtain a return showing how many of the existing heads of offices were, at some time in their career, private secretaries to Ministers. It would be even more interesting if such a return could be extended so as to embrace assistant secretaryships, and so as to show how many of those occupying such positions had been private secretaries to Permanent Heads. If the return could include a period of years, it would be even more instructive.

It will be found that by far the greater number of such officials had been private secretaries. Yet there is no reason why such persons should be a whit more able than the great majority of the class from which they were selected. It is

neither ability nor industry that wins a private secretaryship to a Minister (though those qualities count, of course, in any selection made by the Permanent Head). The Minister chooses his private secretary for a variety of reasons : because he knows his people, because a friend has recommended him, because he is of good family, a "Society" man, and so forth.

Once appointed, the private secretary, if he is only cute enough to play his cards well, is pretty sure of getting unmerited advancement. The Minister, who in most cases knows nothing whatever of the administration of the office to which he has been appointed, leans upon his private secretary, who is his constant tutor and adviser. The private secretary must develop industry (possibly only temporary), he must be skilled in flattery, and exhibit such abilities as he possesses with a becoming modesty. If he is judicious he soon gains the full confidence of the Minister, and, though far less experienced and probably less able than most of the men senior to him, he soon finds himself in a position to intrigue against them. Like a young cuckoo, he gradually shoulders them out of the nest. He seizes his opportunities, not openly attacking them, but damning with faint praise, shakes of the head, a professed unwillingness to discuss them, finally ending with (apparently) forced bursts of confidence, and very soon the desired result is obtained.

It has been well said that a man in the Civil Service is fit for any position in which Providence happens to call him, and if he cannot do his work himself, he can always get others to do it for him. The man who gets to the top, even by foul means, is, however, never a fool ; but the service suffers, because he lacks the experience and the discretion of his seniors. With the self-confidence of youth he is apt to regard himself as infallible, and to sweep away from his path all whose services are longer and whose knowledge of administration is greater than his own. The result is that the age-limit is worked to the utmost, and the pension list is burdened with scores of men of the fullest vigour and undiminished capacity, while the taxpayer has to pay.

### 356 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

We are supposed to live in a democratic age and in a democratic country. But there is nothing democratic about the Civil Service system. Those who created that system, which is fully maintained at the present day, designed it as a refuge for men of the same "class" as themselves, educated at the older Universities, so-called "gentlemen," with proper family credentials, and, of course, not belonging to the "lower classes," who, they apparently considered, had no right to expect anything beyond the lower ranks of the service.

So they drew a dividing line, and formed a Second Division; and, while providing that no man who entered above the line should ever be sent down below it, however incapable he might be, they arranged that men once below the line should stop below the line, however capable they might be, so that the sacred "class" circle should not be invaded by persons who did not belong to it by birth and education. It is true that the logic of facts forced them to admit, in theory at any rate, that persons below the line might, under very exceptional circumstances, be promoted above it. But the theory is rarely put into practice, and the mass of the Higher Division is still composed of men who belong to a select "class," and who have received a University education. Part of the Higher Division is recruited by examination and part by nomination of various Ministers; but in either case the same "class" restriction obtains, for the examination is strictly adjusted to "class" requirements, and is out of the reach of men whose means are not sufficient to pay for a University education or its equivalent, and, of course, no one outside the sacred hierarchy is ever admitted under the nomination system.

"Nomination" lends itself freely to jobbery, and there are plenty of cases where friends and relations of Ministers, ex-Ministers, and permanent officials have profited by it. But both nomination and examination under the existing system have one and the same end in view—to keep the Higher Division undefiled. The scandal is great, and its manifest injustice causes ceaseless unrest. The Higher Division does not, however, altogether enjoy a bed of roses. In some

offices no member of the staff, however well qualified and experienced, is ever promoted to the highest position. Knowledge and service appear to be regarded as actual disqualifications for promotion. Those offices are the various Departments over which the Treasury claims a special control, such as the Customs, Excise, Exchequer and Audit, Mint, and others, all quite separate from the Treasury in organisation, but whose headships are claimed by the Treasury as being in their gift. Such appointments are almost invariably bestowed upon Treasury clerks who have been private secretaries. The consequence is that the Treasury is constantly being denuded, to an extent quite inconsistent with the maintenance of its efficiency, of the most experienced of its staff, while the offices to which the Treasury clerks are appointed suffer from the knowledge, common to every employee, that, however industrious and able he may be, he can never attain such a position as would be open to him in other departments of the service.

The Civil Service Estimates have been increasing for years by leaps and bounds, and are still growing rapidly. Many Departments have become unwieldy and far too costly. The chief reason is that no check has been exercised on the Permanent Heads, whose interest it is to enlarge their Departments, and, in particular, to add to them as many highly paid officials as possible, as thereby their own importance is increased.

A Royal Commission on the Civil Service is sitting at the present time. But no Royal Commission has ever succeeded in checking the waste, the extravagance, the favouritism, and jobbery prevalent in the service.

It seems that other means are needed. There ought to be a Commission of Inquiry into the cost and organisation of each office, investigating all matters in detail, and with the fullest powers. This Commission should be composed entirely of ex-Civil Servants and outsiders.

There should also be established a system of free promotion throughout each office, breaking down the barrier between the Higher and the Second Division, and there should be a

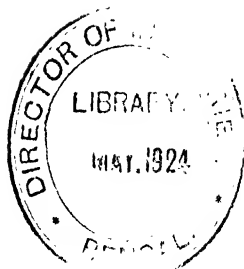


## 358 THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

rule that no man should be imported from outside into the higher ranks of the staff except for special reasons, which should be given in a report presented to Parliament.

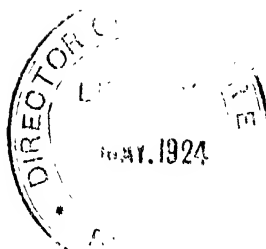
These measures, in addition to the court of appeal previously suggested, would go far to democratise, and to clean, the Civil Service.

THE END



## THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND AFTER

Appeals to the reader interested in the theory, practice,  
and administration of Education and in the science  
of government. Overleaf are particulars of  
further books treating of these subjects  
and from various aspects.



## THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN WAR AND PEACE

By Sir WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, K.C.B., formerly  
Secretary, Ministry of Food, now Director, London  
School of Economics. 2s. net.

"A brilliant outline of the Civil Service. We recommend this pamphlet to any interested in the machinery of government."—*Fabian News*.

## WELSH EDUCATION IN SUNLIGHT AND SHADOW

By G. PERRIE WILLIAMS, M.A., Litt.D. 5s. net.

## CITIZENS TO BE

THE PRINCIPLES OF XX. CENTURY HUMANISM IN  
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL LIFE

By M. L. V. HUGHES. With a Preface by Pro-  
fessor MUIRHEAD of Birmingham. 2nd Imp. 5s. net.

## EXAMINATIONS AND THEIR RELATION TO CULTURE AND EFFICIENCY

By P. J. HARTOG, C.I.E., M.A., B.Sc. 3s. 6d. net.

## GERMAN AND ENGLISH EDUCATION

A Comparative Study by Fr. R. DE HOVRE of  
Louvain University. 2nd Imp. 2s. 6d. net.

## **THE WORKS OF EDMOND G. A. HOLMES**

WHAT IS AND WHAT MIGHT BE

Paper, 1s. 6d. Cloth, 2s. 6d.

IN DEFENCE OF WHAT MIGHT BE

5s. net.

THE TRAGEDY OF EDUCATION

2s. 6d. net.

CONSTABLE AND COMPANY LIMITED

10-12 ORANGE STREET

LONDON, W.C.2









